The Beaver

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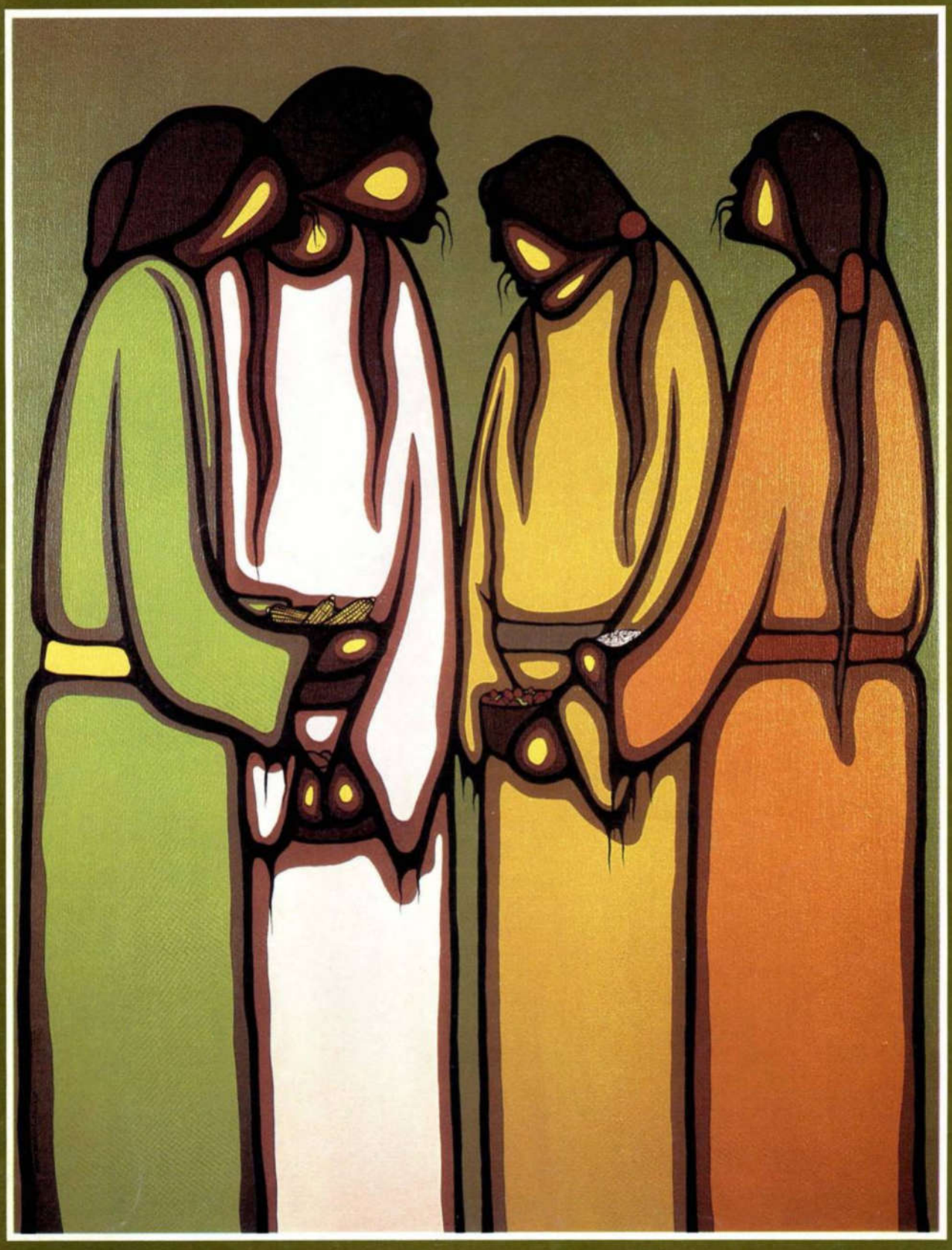

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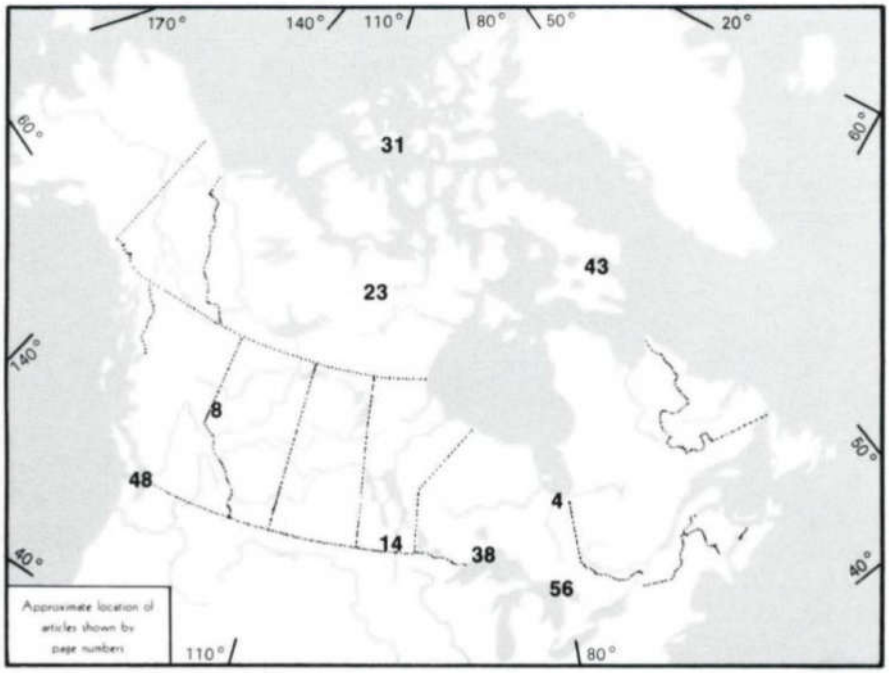

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Tamarack Geese

By Richard Lueger

Mr Lueger, an archaeologist by profession, has been doing historical research in Moose Factory for two years.

Photographs by the author unless credited otherwise.

Campbell & Chipman, Winnipeg

Oliver Small, one of Moose Factory's best and most prolific craftsmen, makes his tamarack geese inside this tent.

ON A BLUSTERY DAY in early spring I stepped over patches of snow in front of Oliver Small's house at Moose Factory and walked up to the canvas tent where he was making tamarack geese. A bundle of fresh tamarack lay protected beneath a canoe, and a pile of stripped, discarded branches stood by the door. Inside, a wood fire cracked in a box stove and I removed my coat. I had come to watch while Oliver, one of the best and most prolific of the James Bay craftsmen, completed a large tamarack goose.

Moose Factory is the birthplace and principal production centre for tamarack geese. These bird sculptures of various sizes are made of bound tamarack twigs by a small group of Cree Indian hunters and a few Cree women.

Oliver Small is typical of the artisans in Moose Factory and in nearby Moosonee. Most of the people are originally from Rupert House, another Cree village just over the Quebec border. Oliver first came to Moose Factory as a child to attend residential school, but his father took him away during his third year at school to go trapping. He returned in 1960, when he and his wife moved back to take advantage of better job opportunities and services. Oliver and his wife are now members of the Moose Band and live on the Moose Factory reserve.

Oliver lives by hunting, trapping, fishing, making tamarack geese and driving a water taxi for the summer tourists. Each summer some 20,000 visitors come up from Cochrane on the 'Polar Bear Express', an excursion train that arrives at Moosonee on the

Tamarack geese from Moose Factory.

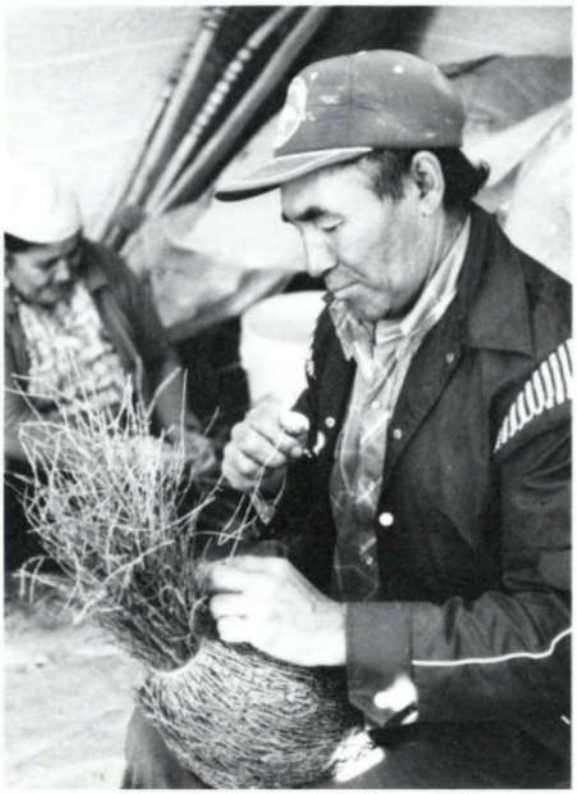
mainland. Many visit Moose Factory Island, being shuttled over and back in freighter canoes.

The past winter has been a fair season for Oliver Small. Fur prices have remained steady and his sales of tamarack geese have been exceptional. The spring goose hunt was disappointing, however, and he feels that he should go out again to look for stragglers. His family depends on the geese as a staple in their diet throughout the year. When he has received enough money for his tamarack geese he will charter a helicopter to the hunting grounds. With the spring break-up in progress, travel by skidoo or canoe is difficult and dangerous. Although he could probably use the money to better advantage for food at the Bay store instead of paying for the helicopter charter, it is more important to him to have a stock of wild geese and he will do whatever is necessary to ensure that stock.

As we talk we hear a goose cry outside, so near, but Oliver does not reach for his gun. 'That's just my youngest son, practising,' he explains. His people pride themselves on their ability to call geese without artificial aids.

Oliver mentions that he has been making tamarack geese for about ten years. Before that, he used to make goose decoys, but out of willow twigs, not tamarack. Willow-twig decoys are, in fact, an ancient tradition of the James Bay Cree and the closely related Montagnais of Quebec. The decoys were used only for the spring hunt because when seen against the snow, the 'eye' mimicked the white cheek patch of the Canada goose. Sometimes mud decoys

The core of the Moose Factory goose is a ball of small tamarack twigs, which ensures that the bird has lasting fragrance.



In three hours, Oliver Small makes a large bird from selected twigs. He compresses them tightly . . .

. . . and ties them with heavy string.

were used as well, and these and wood decoys were used for the fall hunt. In recent years, however, hunters have tended to use plastic decoys bought at the store for both spring and fall hunts.

The tamarack geese were first made by John Blueboy of Rupert House. Mr Blueboy was a wood sculptor and in 1965 when he was under treatment at Moose Factory General Hospital, his stay was mysteriously prolonged so he could finish sets of small cedar geese for all the nurses. When he tried to sell the willow decoys he made for the hunt he was told that the dark willow was too sombre and uninteresting. He decided to substitute tamarack, or eastern larch, a tree common in the vast muskeg of the James Bay Lowland. The tamarack was an attractive golden colour and it exuded a rich and lasting fragrance. Tourists and local residents were delighted with the innovation and a new art form was born. John taught the craft to others at Moose Factory and the geese were sold at Expo '67, eventually finding their way to many corners of the globe.

John Blueboy eventually returned to Rupert House where others learned the craft, as did Cree from more northerly villages who visited Moose Factory and Rupert House. The marketing service of the federal Department of Indian Affairs sold the geese from 1970 until its demise in 1978. From then on the craftsmen sold their wares as best they could, sometimes through brokers, sometimes directly to stores, often just to tourists passing through. John Blueboy sells his work mainly through an agent in Chicago, while Oliver Small sells most of his production locally.

Although as a medium the tamarack geese are more limited in potential than Eskimo sculpture, each artisan develops and maintains an individual style that is expressive and personal. Family styles are sometimes noticeable; Oliver's son, Charlie, makes geese very similar to his father's. In contrast, the three Blueboy brothers, John, George and Ronald, all have very distinct styles. John's geese tend to be broad-backed birds that seem to be ruffling their wing feathers. Their necks are slender and the tails blunt. George prefers delicate, sensuous birds with sinuous necks and neatly sculptured tails. Ronald makes stark, stylized, square-chested birds from thick twigs cleaned of buds.

Oliver Small's technique in creating the geese can be divided into several main steps. First, the tamarack twigs are gathered, usually during the milder parts of the winter when the stands of trees can be reached by snowmobile and when the trappers have long nights in the woods to shape the birds. If the weather is too cold the twigs grow brittle and

He uses black or brown thread to stitch the body, neck and head . . .

. . . trims the tail with a sharp knife and the uneven twigs with scissors.

shatter. And, if the twigs are gathered in summer, the craftsmen must travel by boat and on foot into the mosquito-infested muskeg, and then must strip the needles from the twigs. The tamarack, although it is a conifer, is not an evergreen; it loses its needles every fall.

Once the boughs are gathered and brought home, twigs of appropriate length are chosen, assembled and laid parallel on a heavy string. The trimmings are kept in a nearby pile and from these, small twigs are chosen, rolled together in a ball and tied with string to form the core of the bird. It is important that tamarack twigs be used in the core in order to retain the characteristic tamarack fragrance. The ball of tamarack is encircled with the parallel twigs and the bundle is tied temporarily with a heavy string.

To form the tail and body, another heavy cord is used to tie one end into the tail. The twigs must be very tightly compressed or the bird will not be of acceptable quality. A finer brown or black string is then tied around the tail and run along the bird to be tied around the base of the neck. The heavy string around the tail is removed and a sharp knife is used to shape and trim the tail.

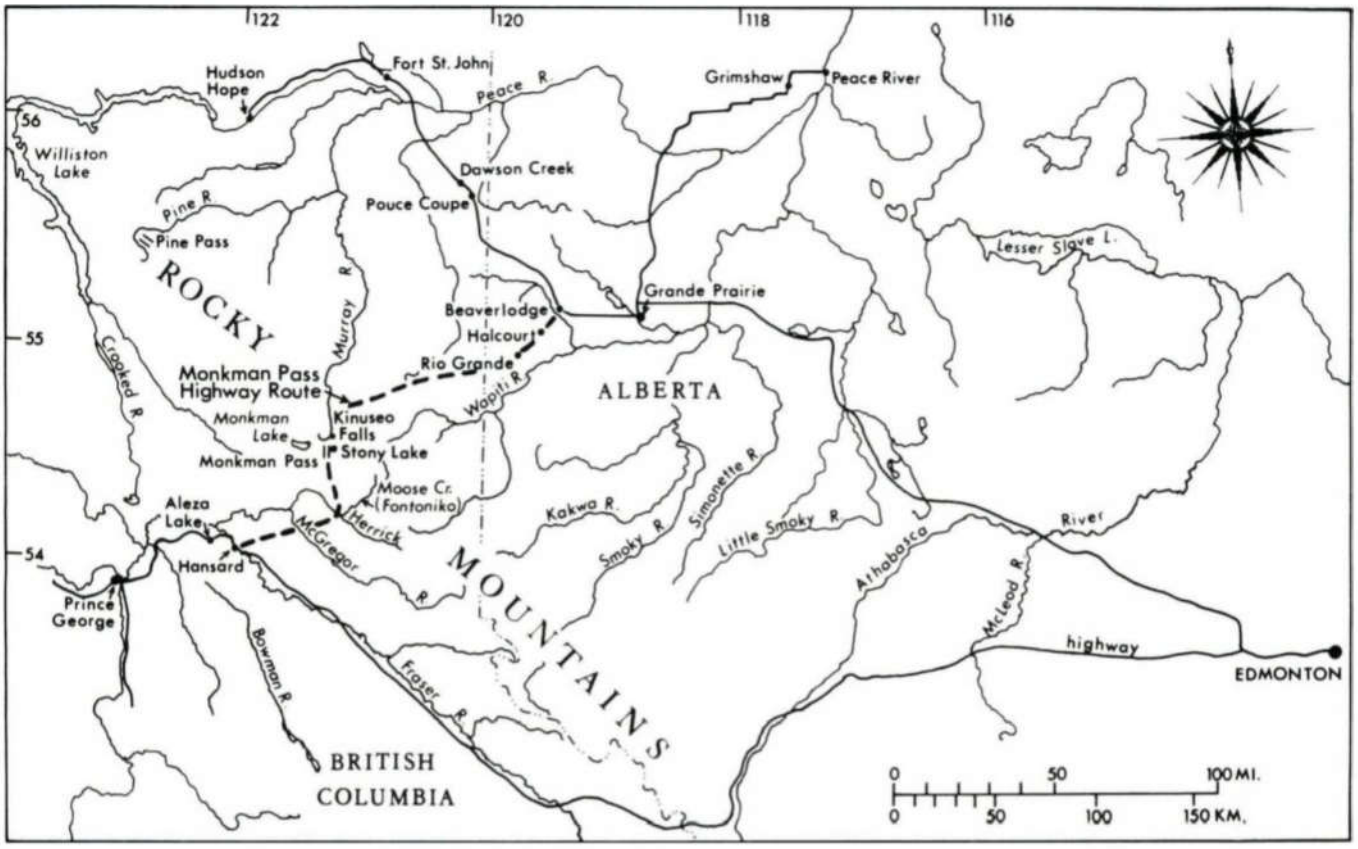
Black or brown string is used to stitch the body, neck and head. Oliver threads it through a sailmaker's needle, and sews successive loops around the body from the tail forward, finally spiraling up the neck to form the head. He adds or subtracts twigs in the neck according to need. For the neck and head, Oliver may choose any one of several positions: a preener or feeder, or a bird with head erect.

To finish the bird, heavy twigs of tamarack are whittled to a point on one end and driven into the body to form the legs. Most birds receive three legs for balance but a few craftsmen supply only two. ('How many geese have you seen with three legs?' they ask.) Finally, the loose ends of tamarack are snipped off. All told, it takes some three hours to make a large bird.

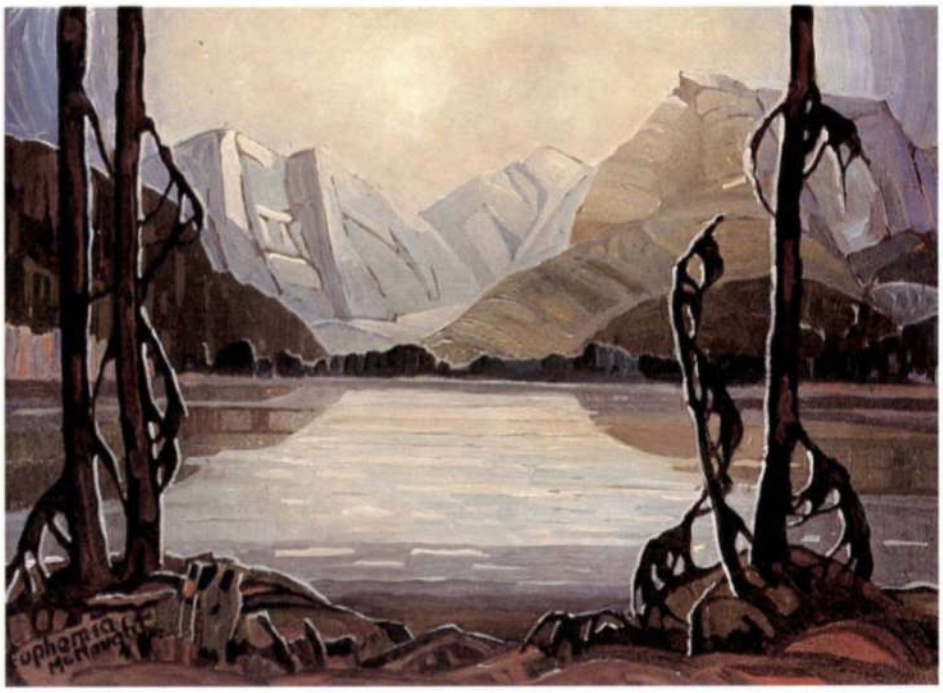
Tamarack geese constitute an important source of revenue for the hunters who make them, but neither John Blueboy nor the artisans as a group have tried to copyright the idea or control the production and marketing. The co-operative, tolerant Cree artisans seem, on the contrary, ready to teach any of their younger men who might wish to make the birds. Unfortunately, non-Cree Indians of the more southerly bands have recently begun making inferior copies, threatening one of the few commercially viable crafts open to the James Bay Cree in Ontario. It would be tragic if this distinctive craft, rooted as it is in the traditions of a people, became debased through the overproduction of imitations. ◆

Monkman Pass

By Richard J. Chamberlin



Mr Chamberlin is a Winnipeg writer and editor. He wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Chuck Baxter of Crown Zellerbach, Vancouver, in researching the Monkman story.



'Monkman Lake', near the summit of Monkman Pass. From a painting by Euphemia McNaught of Beaverlodge, Alberta, 1938.

THAT WALL of resolute rock reaching down the western coast of North America from Fairbanks, Alaska, to El Paso, Texas, does not relinquish its secrets easily. Years were spent and lives lost in the quest for routes over the Canadian Rockies. Major A. B. Rogers struggled for two summers to cross the perilous Selkirk Range and blaze a trail for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Road engineers laboured for another two years to put the tracks through. The Kicking Horse Pass had been so harrowing for mountain guide Tom Wilson that, years later, he insisted that words could not describe it.

When a man named Alex Monkman, a trapper and a farmer, confronted the wall in 1937, leading a precocious band of amateurs — Peace River farmers simply wanting a road to the coast for their grain —all odds were against him. When they came within a hair's breadth of opening up the northern mountain pass and pushing their cherished highway through from Rio Grande, Alberta, over the Great Divide to Hansard, British Columbia, it was not the Rockies that finally defeated them.

Alex Monkman, born at Oak Point, Manitoba, in 1869, moved to Prince Albert with his family when he was four. He left home at 16 and became a well-known bronco buster and a copper miner in Butte, Montana. During the winter of 1897-98, Monkman journeyed from Butte to Edmonton to visit relatives and was immediately caught up in the excitement of the gold rush. Taking promoters at their word, he followed the famed Overland Trail — claimed to be the best route to the Klondike — to Fort St John. There he came face to face with something the promoters had failed to mention: the 1,500 miles of trackless wilderness that stood between him and the Yukon gold fields. Discouraged, Monkman drew rein and turned his horse towards the Peace River country. There he began a new life and an enduring committment to the finest mountain pass on the continent.

Along the trail, he crossed paths with 'Peace River Jim' — Colonel J. K. Cornwall of Edmonton — and his partner, Fletcher Bredin. The men hired him to build and manage a trading post at Lake Saskatoon, Alberta, in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company. Young Alex enjoyed the Peace River country and decided to settle near the post, twelve miles from the end-of-track town of Grande Prairie. During the summers he farmed and in the winters he trapped in the foothills of Alberta and in the mountains of British Columbia.

It was on one of these pursuits for fur in the winter of 1921 that the tall horseman and his men pressed farther into the wilderness of British Columbia than they had ever gone before. Finally, those with him, including his Indian guide Callahoo, turned back for reasons unknown and Monkman went on alone.

When deep in the mountains a strange feeling came over the trapper. The valley he followed did not rise steeply as it swept westward. There was no imposing barrier of rock. Monkman was puzzled. He encountered a party of men who had packed in from the west and asked them about the route they had taken. 'Did you have to cross high mountains to get to this spot?' The men had not. Still baffled, Monkman looked at the waters of the Herrick River. The flow was to the west, not the east. He had crossed the Great Divide into British Columbia with ease and had become the first man to travel this extraordinary gap from one side to the other and recognize it as a pass.

Engineers later told him he had found the lowest pass north of Missoula, Montana. The Cordillera here literally bowed down, leaving a gate through the Rockies no higher in elevation than Calgary's 3,550 feet, and no steeper in grade than three-quarters of one per cent, compared with four per cent in Rogers Pass.

Although he did not know it at the time, the discovery was, for Monkman, the start of a magnificent obsession. He returned home immediately and contacted the railways, for here was the solution to the slow and costly movement of grain that plagued the farmers of the Peace. Wheat, which then had to backtrack 400 miles to Edmonton before heading west again through the Yellowhead Pass, could reach British Columbia's transport routes in under 200 miles if a road went through this pass.

The railways were interested and the next summer Monkman took Murray Hill, a survey engineer for the Canadian Pacific Railway, over his pass. The prospects for a rail route brightened. There was, in fact, every reason to believe one of the railways would choose this route, for only two small rock cuts would be necessary and only one important bridge had to be built. The snowfall at the pass was slight for the mountains — two-and-a-half to three feet usually, but six feet in some seasons — compared with fifty feet a year at the summit of Rogers Pass in the Selkirks. The pass was a sportsman's paradise: trout, moose and grizzly were plentiful and, for the tourist, there were fifteen cataracts along the route. Kinuseo Falls, the most spectacular, fell 210 feet, 52 feet higher than Niagara. It seemed clear to Monkman that the economic benefits of the pass, coupled with the tourist possibilities, would surely find favour with one of the railroads.

Nothing came of the survey for what seemed an eternity. Seven years later, in 1929, Prime Minister Mackenzie King's Liberal government asked that a joint board of Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railway engineers present their report on 'Various Proposed Railway Routes for a Western Outlet to the Pacific from the Peace River District'. The document stated that the entire Monkman Pass

road-bed could be built for $9 million, that there were no engineering difficulties and that much of the grade materials lay at hand along the route. Monkman and his neighbours waited eagerly for the next step.

Then in the 1930s the Great Depression descended upon the world and the matter of a mountain route slipped from the government agenda. The issue remained strongly alive, however, in Peace River and on a stormy night in late October 1936, a heated discussion on the Monkman Pass took place.

At the Beaverlodge Community Hall, not far from Lake Saskatoon, the settlers of the Peace River were recounting broken promises. Twelve years earlier, governments had assured them of a direct rail outlet through the mountains to the coast, if they produced 10 million bushels of grain for export. In 1936 though annual production stood at 25 million bushels (with 2,600 carloads of hogs and beef cattle as well) there was still neither road nor railway. That autumn their crops were harvested but there was no jubilation among the Peace River farmers. Grain prices were low and they were afraid that shipping their produce to Vancouver over the rickety Northern Alberta Railway might earn them only a huge freight bill for their year's work. Monkman had been asked to speak to the group, many of them members of the Board of Trade. He wasted no words:

> Aren't we all pioneers? Didn't we chop our way through bush, mud, and muskeg, rotting river ice and worse to get to this fertile land? What are we waiting for? Let's blaze our way out!

Those words were the catalyst that brought the Monkman Pass Highway Association into existence. Later at a meeting in the log schoolhouse in Halcourt, Alberta, Monkman and thirteen farmers hammered out the details. The slogan on their literature summarized their objective: 'Promoting the 132-mile non-ferry, connecting link on the coast-to-coast highway through the Great Peace River country.'

That winter in north-western Alberta, there were meetings, speeches and plans. In the spring, the men would cross the Rockies just west of their homesteads and begin to lay a road that would hook up with British Columbia's highways at Hansard. Nothing would stand in their way.

In May 1937, John A. Johnson of LaGlace, Alberta, headed a volunteer labour force out of Dave Kelleo's farm at the west end of the country. A second group started the next month along the south side of Stony Lake near the summit of the pass. Among the men were river freighter and trapper Ole Hansen; trapper Martin Framstad; Henri Hobi whose cabin at the junction of Moose Creek and the Herrick River was one of the landmarks of the pass route; and a man named Bergstrom, another Scandinavian adventurer living in the high country west of the Peace.

The work crews had no machinery. They cleared away timber with axes, saws, shovels, and two horse-drawn earth scoops, while north and south of the Peace River there were fairs, concerts, dances, sales and raffles to raise money for the task that lay ahead.

By the end of August, Alex Monkman and a small group had blazed the trail to Prince George and work crews had cut a swath eight feet wide from Rio Grande, Alberta, to Stony Lake, British Columbia, a distance of about sixty miles. The young road swept across small streams, over corduroyed muskeg, past

Members of one of the work parties who donated their time to clearing the Monkman Pass road. On the right, standing, is Alex Monkman and seated on the wagon tongue is his daughter Chrissie Monkman (right) and Jean MacKie. The girls were volunteer cooks.

Stojan Collection

fallen trees and shrubs, and through thick stands of poplar and spruce. In October 1937, a party of six men and ten horses under the direction of Alex Watt extended the trail further westward to the Herrick River. There, Watt and A. Cunningham built a raft and followed the river down to Aleza Lake; from there they walked to Prince George where merchants donated food, tools, and equipment to the cause. More help came from Hansard, Dawson Creek, and even Vancouver.

These determined farmers, for whom the building of this road was a passion, not a vocation, learned two things that summer of 1937. They now knew they had the will and the manpower to push their highway over the Rockies and through to Hansard. But, they also knew they would need outside financial help if they were to carry the project through to completion. The following spring Frank Murphy, Mrs Art Hazzard-Smith, and a small delegation of the Monkman Pass Highway Association travelled to Vancouver to seek that help.

On Friday, 22 April 1938, at the Hotel Grosvenor they met with Vancouver Mayor George Miller, New Westminster Mayor Fred Hume, and representatives of the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Vancouver Exhibition Association. Their arguments were convincing. The audience heard how a group of settlers, some of them pioneers in their sixties, had set out with little food and equipment and had carved a trail over the mountains through to Hansard, then had built fifty-five miles of road west from Rio Grande to Stony Lake. Seventy-seven miles remained to be done. With help, they could do it that summer.

Vancouver had grown blasé about elaborate schemes costing hundreds of thousands of dollars, but the audience found something fresh in the Monkman Pass proposal. In defence of the plea, the Vancouver *Daily Province* published an editorial on Saturday, 23 April.

> What is needed is a comparatively small amount of money — $15,000 for supplies. It is unthinkable that the plan should be allowed to lapse for want of so small a sum. If the money is forthcoming, the first car will be through from Pouce Coupe to the Vancouver City Hall by October 1. After that, it will be merely a question of improving the highway and of linking it up with the Alberta system of roads leading on to Edmonton.
>
> The highway will open up a new route to the Coast for nearly 100,000 people and a country rich in resources and possibilities. It will also bring a great fishing and game country within easy reach of the centres of population and so become an important tourist asset.

Monkman Collection

Alexander Monkman starting a day's work on the Monkman Pass road, 1938.

> The Peace River people are doing their share in providing the necessary labour. Prince George people are backing the project unanimously. Vancouver, now that it has taken the matter up, must not allow it to languish.

When Frank Murphy arrived in Prince George from the coast, he brought good news. Vancouver had promised to raise the money they needed. Now the Monkman Pass Highway Association faced a new challenge: they must not let the interest and the momentum wane. The time had come for publicity stunts.

In the first week of June 1938, while Helmer Johnson was leaving Rio Grande to begin the summer's construction west of the Herrick River, Alex Monkman, Ted Chamber, Carl Brooks, and trapper Martin Framstad set out on foot for British Columbia. They travelled by horse with a 50-pound sack of grain from Arthur Smith's farm in Wembley. They planned to deliver the grain to Professor Paul Boving of the Department of Agriculture at the University of British Columbia who had publicly offered to pay a dollar a pound for the first fruits of the harvest to come through Monkman Pass. Except for a bout of bad luck when they had to abandon their horses near the MacGregor River and proceed on foot to Hansard the journey was a success.

Then, on 22 July, James Lanctot, 21, and Dick Whitaker, 23, set out to traverse the Monkman Pass on foot from Grande Prairie carrying 50-pound and 60-pound packs. At one point, Whitaker injured his leg with an axe and they rested up for eight days in a shack they found along the way. Although the trail had been only blazed and not cleared the young men reached Eleza, a Canadian National Railway station near Hansard, by August 20.

Stojan Collection

World Wheat King Herman Trelle of Wembley, Alberta, writes a note to the mayor of Vancouver while Monkman Pass Association President, Art Smith, looks on. Charlie Stojan is at the wheel to guide 'Pathfinder' over the Monkman Pass road.

On 27 August, the Monkman Pass Highway Association decided to send the first automobile — a Model T Ford — out over the route to Vancouver that autumn. They named the car 'Pathfinder' and it was started on its way a month later by the townsfolk of Beaverlodge, Alberta, who gathered in the chill September dawn to cheer on the automobile and its crew. The motor sputtered and the slender tires of the little Model T picked their way through the stones of the gravel road reaching west out of town. Her springs were squat under the weight of the four men and their provisions.

Alex Watt, Bruce Albright, and Charles and Jerry Stojan navigated the aging motor car over the pass while a crew of twenty-one located the trail, cleared a right-of-way, filled in the worst of the holes, and managed the supplies and the cooking. It was the last day of September. Half of the route had been miraculously transformed from forest into a dirt road, but roughly seventy miles of rough terrain remained. By 12 October trail-blazing crews at work on the pass had reached the junction of the Herrick River and Fontoniko or Moose Creek, just thirty-five miles from where the Monkman Pass Highway would join the British Columbia road network near Hansard. The men had no machinery to aid them in their task. There had been no financial help beyond association memberships, and no assurances of any future help or recognition. Yet, defiantly, 'Pathfinder' was almost at the Great Divide, her outriders another twenty miles ahead, at the Herrick River. The total cost of the road over which she was travelling was $12,000.

On 13 October *Daily Province* reporter Don Brown travelled the route and filed this report:

> Within a few weeks the British Columbia Legislature will be asked to commit itself in favour of establishing the Monkman Pass Highway and contributing towards its construction costs or else grant a charter to a private syndicate with British capital, which would undertake to build a high class, all weather road over the route as a toll road.

In fact, by the fall of 1938, three different groups of capitalists were willing to invest in the road. Estimates for the highway were running from $800,000 to $1.1 million, and interest was growing. From Edmonton, Don Brown reported that 20,000 automobiles would travel through the pass in the first season after the completion of the highway in 1939 or 1940. A three-cabin resort had been built at Stony Lake, and a man named Rudolph Jacobs was running an inexpensive bus service along the seventy-eight miles completed. There were applications for lots around Monkman Lake near the summit of the pass and near by, a developer had filed on a square mile of land to establish a dude ranch.

Out in the pass, nothing could go wrong for 'Pathfinder'. She had her sights set on an early arrival in Hansard, then departure down the Yellowhead and through the last of the Rockies to Vancouver. 'Murphy's Car Crew', headed by P. J. Murphy, was riding with 'Pathfinder', tugging the car through streams and up 150-foot embankments using horses and a two-inch rope wrapped around burned-out tree stumps. The entire crew was jubilant that in just days the Monkman trail would be behind them. Then winter closed in on the high country.

'We were making about five miles a day with the car until we had the first snow on November 5. After that we could do only about a quarter of that. Finally, just before we got to McGregor River, we had to give up,' Alex Watt said. 'If we had had one more day of fine weather, we could have made it.'

The disappointments of that summer only prolonged the bitter winter months that followed. The roadway was not yet through to Hansard. The Alberta government was unable to finance a road into British Columbia and the government of British Columbia was hesitant to put money into a road requested by Alberta which did not serve any British Columbia towns on its way from Rio Grande to Hansard. The Vancouver money, promised to Frank Murphy that hopeful night at the Hotel Grosvenor, was still only a promise. But, win or lose, the Peace River settlers had much to be proud of, and the Vancouver *Province* would not let that be forgotten:

> The saga of the Monkman Pass — the song of achievement in the face of discouragement and poverty, the heroic story of individual initiative substituting for government inability — is the realization of unity among people and the demonstration of enthusiasm translated into effort.

That effort continued. Association officials Dan Harris, W. J. Moore, and Frank Murphy gave up

Christmas with their families and friends to stay on in Vancouver, working night and day in pursuit of the money they needed. Only $4,000 of the promised $15,000 had appeared, and that had been swallowed up by the muskeg and bush of the Northern Rockies. Now, the association needed $30,000 to take the road through from Kinuseo Falls to Hansard. Murphy was determined to succeed and on the night of 23 December he spoke at the Hotel Grosvenor: 'We have passed the halfway mark. We are well on the way. Another eight miles and we shall be looking for someone to perform the opening ceremonies.'

Early in 1939, Dawson Creek residents planned a caravan along Monkman Pass Highway to raise membership revenue for the spring construction work. In March, the association announced plans to erect a cairn to mark the Great Divide and commemorate those of the district who had worked on the road. Newspaper stories throughout the spring were full of hope.

Twenty-five hundred miles away, in Ottawa, the enthusiasm of the newspapers spilled into the political arena. Rene Pelletier, the Social Credit member for Peace River, the Honourable H. H. Stevens, Conservative member for Kootenay East, and Gray Turgeon, Liberal member for Cariboo pleaded with the House of Commons to assist with the construction of the Monkman Pass Highway.

Good news came in July 1939. Turgeon announced to the people of Peace River that the federal government would make a grant to the project, provided that British Columbia would match it dollar for dollar. All along the pass route, crews were beginning to celebrate. But the jubilation was short-lived. British Columbia Premier T. D. Pattullo replied that it was not possible to commit funds at that time. Despite this setback, the workers pressed on.

The city of Prince George had loaned two ferries to the project until crews could afford to build bridges across the Herrick and McGregor rivers. A competition had been organized to raise $2,500, for expenses were climbing sharply. Road crews now needed $40,000 for supplies and another $85,000 for bridge steel. But, somehow the workers high in the pass carried on, predicting that the Monkman Pass Road would be in use in September. At this point an unofficial race developed between crews on the Monkman Pass Highway and the Turgeon Highway, a government-built road in another section of British Columbia. By 27 July, the publicly financed highway had cost half a million dollars; the Monkman route had cost $15,000, though each covered roughly the same distance. By 16 August, the Turgeon road was 46 miles short of its destination, compared with the 56 miles for the Monkman Pass Highway.

Tourists, too, ventured into the tamed wilderness of the pass. A cavalcade of trucks that had tried to reach Kinuseo Falls in July 1938, returned in August 1939, and drove to within three miles of the falls. The travellers found that four men from Beaverlodge — Bruce Albright, Alex Watt, Rupert Perry, and Paul Kindervater — had expanded their buildings above the falls at Stony Lake to five log cabins, a recreation centre, restaurant, stables, and a corral.

Stojan Collection

'Pathfinder' on one of the log bridges built by volunteers along the Monkman Pass road.

With the return of the cold rainy weather in September, the only guests left at the Stony Lake Lodge were three women who on the night of 6 September, were planning a journey over the pass when the weather cleared. They had arranged for guides and horses to take them through to the Herrick River, by boat to the McGregor River, then to Hansard and by rail to Prince George. Their plans came to an abrupt halt that night when it was announced on the radio that German U-boats had destroyed the passenger liner *Athenia*. Britain was at war and Canada would follow.

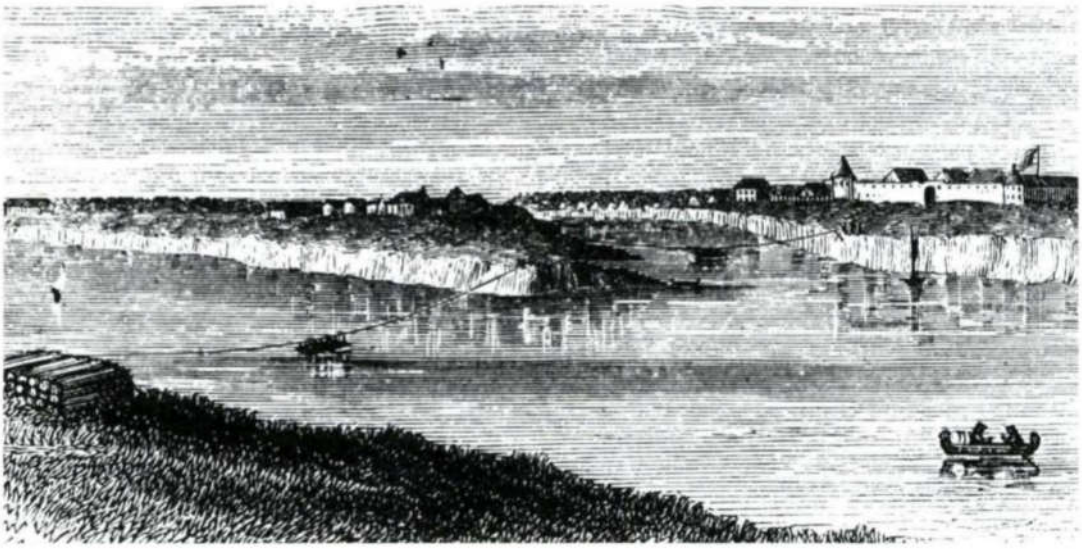
The proprietors locked up the lodge and went to war. Bruce Albright died in the skies over the English Channel. And, on 24 September 1941, Alex Monkman, at the age of 72, collapsed at his farm at Cut Bank Lake and died two days later at Grande Prairie. With him went his dream, for after the war, the British Columbia government prohibited further work on the road and closed the pass area.

In 1958 the Pacific Great Eastern Railway pushed a line through the mountains from Alberta to British Columbia. The British Columbia government had given the people of Dawson Creek and Fort St. John the choice of the Monkman Pass route or the more northerly Pine Pass which, though longer and more expensive, would take the railway through those two towns. It was a choice the inhabitants had not had in 1937 and they accepted it.

All that remains today of the Monkman Pass is an overgrown trail across the mountains. ◆

The early ferry system was 'an unmitigated nuisance'. An editorial in the 'Nor'Wester', 13 May 1865, complained: '. . . the means of transportation at present consists of one boat, rotten; one canoe, leaky and muddy; two assistants, small boys; and one Ferryman, drunken . . .'

Sketch of 'The Forks — showing the original site of Fort Rouge' between the Red and Assiniboine rivers. From the Stovell Collection in the Manitoba Archives.



Mr Brydges' Bridges

By John Selwood

A BRIDGE MADE WINNIPEG, put it on the map to stay. A bridge over the Red River drew the Canadian Pacific Railway through the foundling city to consolidate it as the 'Western Gateway' and focus of development for the Canadian plains.

Charles Brydges, the Hudson's Bay Company's Land Commissioner (1879-1889), tried hard to get that bridge. It and the railway, he knew, would attract business and create a demand for land in the Company's reserve of 500 acres at Upper Fort Garry. Brydges failed to secure the railway bridge, but he did the next best thing. He formed the Red River and Assiniboine Bridge Company to build two road bridges into the reserve. Although built solely for the benefit of the Hudson's Bay Company, the bridges added significantly to Winnipeg's transport network, providing much improved access to the city centre for both the local citizens and for the region's population.

Provision of improved access across the Red and Assiniboine rivers was an ongoing concern to local citizens. During winter, ice formed an easily crossed natural bridge and in the summer months ferries provided a limited service. However, during freeze-up and thaw, crossing the rivers could be difficult and dangerous. As the settlement grew, bridges became a high priority. The need for a bridge over the Red River assumed first priority in the 1870s when the people of Winnipeg realized that the proposed trans-

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Professor Selwood of the history department, University of Winnipeg, has a particular interest in western urban development from the 1870s onward.

Manitoba Archives

Charles John Brydges, c. 1889. Brydges was appointed Land Commissioner for the Hudson's Bay Company in 1879; he devoted much time to developing transportation routes to enhance the value of Company land.

Manitoba Archives

A floating bridge across the Assiniboine was built from flatboats that had been used for transporting seed grain. It is visible in the distance in this section of the painting of 'The Forks' by W. Frank Lynn, 1872.

continental railway line might pass them by.

The Winnipeg lobby with the Canadian government for a bridge had been maintained at a high level for several years. The city had initially hoped to persuade the government to route the transcontinental line through Winnipeg, then, when this failed, sought the government's support in extending the Pembina Branch west of the city. The city was eventually successful in attracting the Canadian Pacific Railway Syndicate and bringing the main line and its workshops to the city in return for a grant of $200,000, land donations, and tax exemptions in perpetuity. The Louise bridge was built in 1881 and Winnipeg finally established its dominance over other contending communities.

However, the city council was not the only group attempting to attract the railway to Winnipeg. The Hudson's Bay Company had also been campaigning to bring the railway to its property in the city. First Chief Commissioner James A. Grahame, then Charles Brydges who was appointed the Company's Land Commissioner in 1879, recommended to their superiors in London that the Canadian government be offered free land for a terminal and right-of-way through the reserve at the Upper Fort, thus increasing its value. When it appeared that the line would be kept to the north of Winnipeg, Brydges suggested that the government's line cross the Red at the Lower Fort where the Company also owned large amounts of land. As an inducement, he proposed that the government and the Company establish a townsite at that point, jointly sharing the proceeds from the sale of land. When it appeared that the government might after all bring the line through at Point Douglas, Brydges again offered land at Upper Fort Garry for the terminus in a final bid to attract the railway to the reserve and increase its real estate value. Although thwarted in all these moves, Brydges nevertheless had other ideas about how to make the reserve more desirable property.

An integral part of his strategy was to build bridges across the Assiniboine and Red rivers to ensure that the Company's property remained the focus of routes into the city from the south and east. The flow of traffic would support the Company's own commercial operations at its new retail store (at York and Main) and encourage other businesses to purchase land and locate in the area instead of seeking sites further north on Main Street where the competition (Dr J. C. Schultz and his business associates) were making serious inroads into the Company's traditional dominance. Overland traffic from the south still used the old Pembina trail on the west side of the Red, while the Pembina Branch railroad brought people and freight to Provencher Avenue in St Boniface. Brydges, in November 1879, anticipating a favourable response from the Company's London principals, moved to have legislation passed by the government

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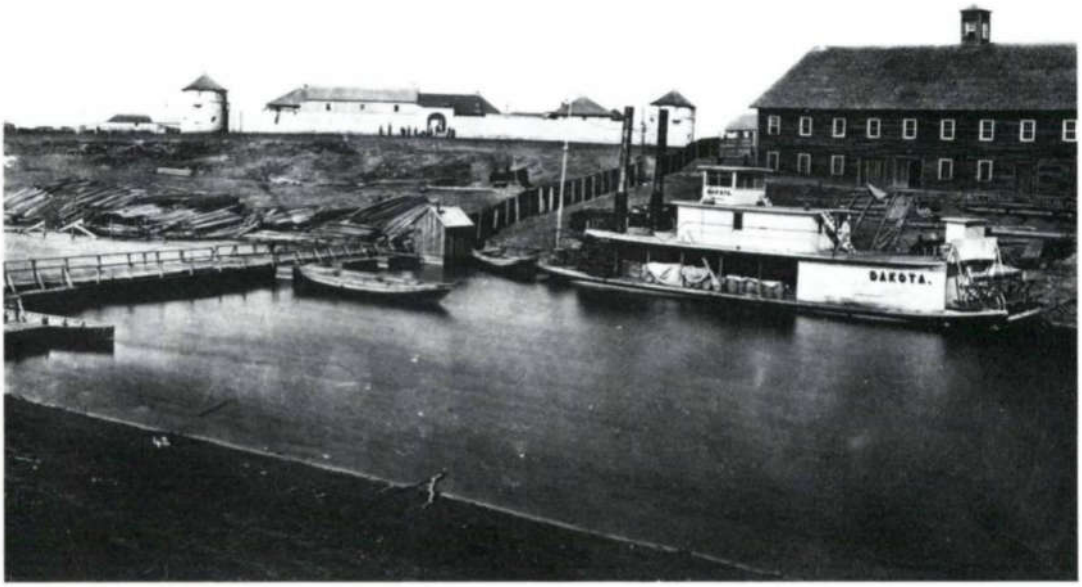


The Assiniboine foot bridge opened in 1869 and was dismantled in the early 1870s, possibly because of the increased river transportation. Upper Fort Garry is in the background.

to permit the incorporation of a bridge-building company.

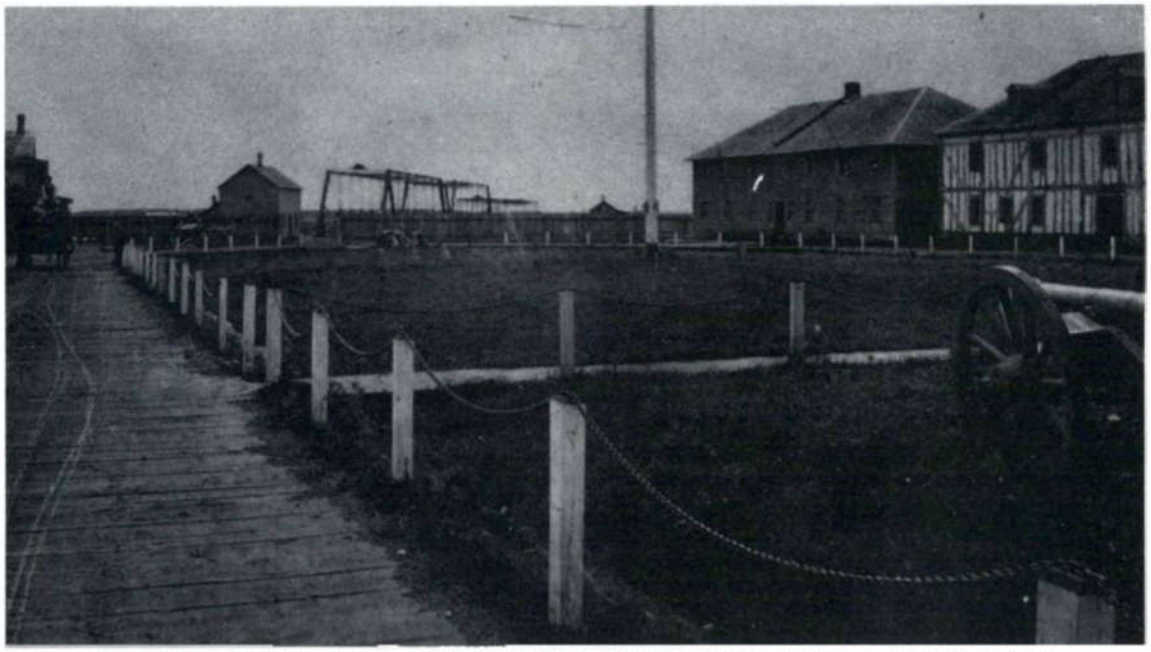
The London Governors, expressing concern at Brydges' initiative, were reassured that the act to incorporate the bridge company, if passed, would not commit the Hudson's Bay Company to build the bridges, and that they would likely cost less than $100,000 in total. The Hudson's Bay Company name need not even be mentioned as being involved with the scheme. On the other hand, if the Company were to show its confidence in the project and subscribe part of the capital in the names of its employees and officers, then Brydges had no doubt that the rest of the capital could be raised and the bridge company established. The proposed bridges were to be designed for 'ordinary carriage and passenger traffic' on which tolls would be charged.

At this point, the winter and spring of 1880, the government had still not committed itself to any course of action other than to build a temporary bridge over the Red at Winnipeg to move railway construction materials across. Meanwhile the city was pressing ahead with its plans to construct a railway and general carriage bridge at Point Douglas to be used as a bonus for the Manitoba and South-Western Railway, a local promotion, or for the government line — so as not to be left out in the cold. In the meantime, Brydges' efforts to proceed with his Red River bridge had been held up; the government had been persuaded by Fleming that it was poorly sited and would likely be carried away. Brydges nevertheless continued to lobby for its approval and ordered plans and estimates prepared for the Assiniboine bridge.

Brydges was able to send details of the proposed Assiniboine bridge to London in June 1880. Recommended was a swing bridge, built on stone-filled, wooden cribs with an iron superstructure — a commonly used design of the period. Its location was to be immediately south of the Fort, forming an extension of Main Street (Brydges' plan was to remove the Fort, establish Main Street as a major artery, and draw commercial development southward from Portage and Main). In quoting the estimated cost of some $30,000, Brydges advised London:

> I think it will be of great advantage to the H.B. Co. to build this bridge, using the machinery of the Co. of course, and that they should own all the stock and derive all the benefit.
>
> I believe that it will pay from the amount of traffic that will pass over it, a fair interest upon the outlay and will besides be very important in aiding the growth of the town at our end, and in developing the value of the lands which we have there.

Brydges was not able to persuade the Hudson's Bay Company to cover the entire cost, but when Governor Eden Colvile visited Winnipeg in August, Colvile directed Brydges to proceed with the Assiniboine bridge, evidently instructing him to raise whatever funds he could locally through a share issue and giving assurances that the Company would cover



A view of the road to the Assiniboine bridge, c. 1880. The buildings of Upper Fort Garry (right) were demolished in 1881 in accordance with Brydges' plan to establish Main Street as a major route.

the remaining expenses.

By the end of October Brydges was able to report that he had persuaded several eminent citizens of Winnipeg to become heavy subscribers to the stock. The contracts were let for $27,300, leaving $21,500 for the Company to raise.

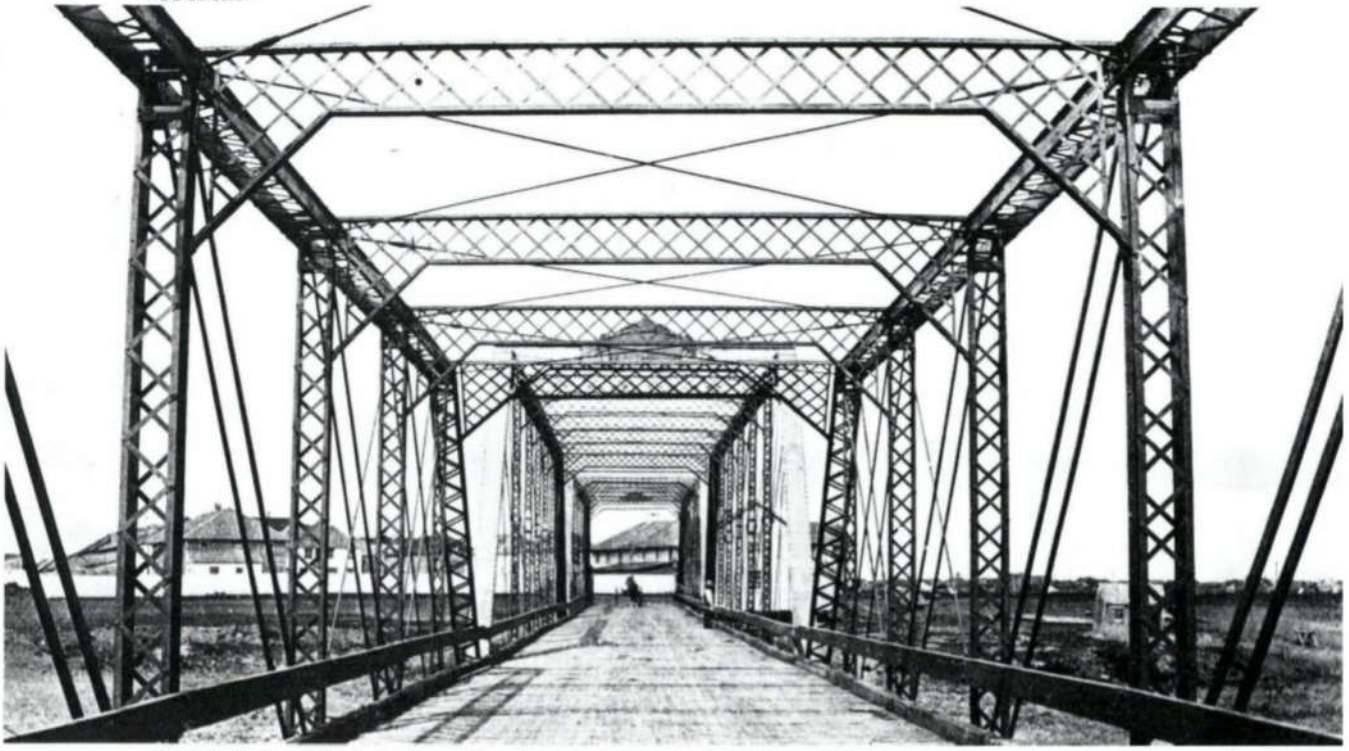
With some satisfaction, Brydges indicated that his project had already generated interest in real estate in the reserve and that local interest was developing in the bridge stock which, after the Red River bridge had been built, would likely sell at a hefty premium. The Company's investment would therefore pay good returns. Brydges advised the HBC directors to take up a majority of the stock and also to float a bond issue. These would secure control over the bridge projects and provide both income and potential capital gain.

This the Company did, taking up $50,000 worth of stock and issuing bonds to the amount of £5,000 (approximately $25,000). The HBC stock was placed in trust and registered in the names of its officers, Brydges and Grahame. These two expressed their confidence in the bridge projects by taking up additional stock, bringing their personal holdings up to $2,500 each, and giving them majority control of the bridge company.

At the end of 1881 Brydges could be highly satisfied with the progress of the bridge company. The Assiniboine bridge had been in operation for several months and was turning a good profit; he had pressed through an amendment to the bridge company's charter permitting the building of the Red River bridge which was now under construction and expected to generate a very good income, and there was a strong demand for shares. In addition, land in the Hudson's Bay Company's reserve was selling well and development was occurring in the area.

The Assiniboine bridge was a very profitable investment. Traffic over the bridge exceeded expectations even before its official opening on Saturday, 18 July 1881. Wagon teams had begun carrying building supplies for housing construction south of the river across the bridge earlier in the week, for, according to the *Manitoba Free Press*, the bridge had generated a building boom along River Avenue. On official opening day, the first on which tolls were charged, nearly 300 pedestrians, along with 16 riders and 138 horse-drawn vehicles, made the crossing. On the next day, Sunday, the bridge keeper was hard pressed to collect the tolls when, in the evening, 'nearly all the young folk of our city paid a visit . . . to St. Boniface West.' Tolls on that day amounted to about $26. Although weekend traffic was generally heavier than during the week, receipts from the Assiniboine Bridge continued to average more than $20 a day so long as the river could not be crossed over the ice. (On 20 January 1881, for example, total receipts were only $2.20.) At year end, Brydges was able to report that the bridge receipts for July to December totalled $3,433.98 which, after expenses of $1,342.29 including bond interest, left a tidy profit of $2,091.69. This allowed him to declare a dividend of four per cent for the first six months of operation. The Assiniboine bridge remained open throughout 1882, surviving

HBC Collection



The Assiniboine toll bridge. A few privileged persons, such as the Archbishop of St Boniface, were given passes to cross the Assiniboine bridge.

Hudson's Bay Company Archives

The obverse and reverse sides of a Red River and Assiniboine Bridge Company token. Foot passengers paid two cents each way; a rider with a horse or mule, five cents each way. Loose animals per head (except sheep, pigs and spring colts following the mares) were five cents, and the charge for one animal drawing a vehicle was fifteen cents each way.

that spring's disastrous break-up, and generating increased returns.

In a sense, the increased revenues signalled the end of HBC interest in the Assiniboine bridge, because they came as a result of a growing resident population in Fort Rouge. This group soon began lobbying for annexation to the City of Winnipeg. As a condition of their becoming part of the city, the group demanded three free bridge connections. This the city was prepared to accede to and opened negotiations for the purchase of the Assiniboine bridge. The negotiations took several months to complete, but in January 1883 Brydges reached agreement with the city, selling the bridge for $45,000. Given that the Assiniboine bridge had been completed at a cost of only $27,000 eighteen months previously, this represented a handsome return on investment.

The proceeds of the transaction were ploughed back into the Red River and Assiniboine Bridge Company which was experiencing a lot more difficulty with its Red River (Broadway) crossing. In fact, the Red River bridge project created problems throughout its much longer history.

Passage of the act approving the formation of a company to build the Red River bridge was held up for many months. Brydges had announced his intention to ask that an act be passed as early as May 1879, but first his hopes of attracting the railway and then his difficulties in persuading the government to

Winnipeg 1912. The three bridges in the foreground are (left) the original Red River or Broadway bridge; the Canadian Northern Railway Company bridge (1902) and the National Transcontinental Railway bridge (1910). On the left, from the top, are: the original Assiniboine bridge, the Canadian Northern Railway bridge (1910) and the original Red River Valley Railway bridge (1888). Dates refer to the registration of surveys.

pass the bill, set back the project. It was not until June 1880 that Brydges called for estimates to be prepared for the Red River bridge. These were completed by the end of the year, but Brydges was still having great difficulty in persuading others that the proposed location of the bridge was acceptable.

In part, opposition to the site was politically motivated, there being some competition from other factions wanting to protect their interests; but there also appeared to be a genuine concern that Brydges' proposal would cause ice jamming and flooding with spring break-up. Brydges, however, was adamantly opposed to suggestions that his bridge should be placed above the mouth of the Assiniboine River. This, he pointed out, would increase the distance between St Boniface station and the bridge to an intolerable degree and require users to pay a double toll, as they would then have to cross the Assiniboine bridge as well. Instead, they would continue to use the ferry between Provencher Avenue and Notre Dame and cross by the ice in winter. The company would be left with a virtually unused bridge that, according to the engineer, would cost more to build, that would not receive any of the promised support from the Town of St Boniface and would benefit neither the Company's lands nor its business operations.

> That the proper place to build the bridge, in the interests of the public, and in the interests of the H.B.Co., is at the point between Provencher and Broadway Avenues, I entertain no doubt whatever, and if it were decided to place the Bridge above the mouth of the Assiniboine, I should recommend the Company not to invest a single dollar in it, as it would, in my opinion, be money thrown away.

Brydges' arguments prevailed in both London and Ottawa and in the spring of 1881 he succeeded in having the Assiniboine Bridge Company Act amended to incorporate the Red River bridge.

Further delays occurred after the contract was finally let in July 1881. The contract called for work to be completed and the bridge opened for traffic by the beginning of March 1882. However, materials failed to arrive on time and bad weather held up construction. Then, five days after it opened, ice carried away two spans of the bridge.

Ice jams downstream raised the river level, while at the same time ice floes from upstream bore down on the bridge putting strain on piers at a much higher point than they were designed for. The piers gave way, bringing down the spans. Days later, a breakaway steamer collided with another span which also collapsed under the onslaught of ice running out from the Assiniboine. Temporary repairs permitted the Red River bridge to be opened to foot passengers by the end of May and by the middle of June it was reopened to regular traffic. Meanwhile, the company lost revenue and faced very heavy repair costs.

Even before the disaster, the Red River bridge had shown a tendency to become a much more costly project than had been anticipated. The construction contract of $94,000 had far exceeded the original estimate of between $68,000 and $75,000. Ironically, part of the increase had been for the provision of more substantial piers than were initially thought sufficient. Temporary repairs to the bridge then cost approximately $8,000. The permanent repairs done later were to add another $50,000, but ended up costing much more. The contractor, after being paid for doing the repairs, went bankrupt before

completing the work, leaving the bridge company to pay others to finish the job. In all, capital expenditures on the Red River bridge ultimately came to $211,704.56.

Initially, Brydges was most optimistic that, despite the disastrous collapse of the bridge, the extra costs would be overcome and the project would become very profitable. There was at first a strong demand for the bridge company's capital stock, giving Brydges the impression that money could be generated from that source. In its first weeks of operation the bridge returned upwards of $100 a day in tolls, leading Brydges to declare a ten per cent dividend on the first six months of 1882. Total income for 1882 amounted to more than $16,000 giving an operating profit of $13,813.54 — and this without the Red River bridge being in operation for several months. A stock dividend was declared, allowing the bridge company to retain the earnings to meet the expenses for repairs.

However, mounting costs forced Brydges to find more capital. Failing to sell much additional stock to the general public in Montreal, he assessed the existing shareholders a six per cent charge on their stock in the form of another share issue. The bridge company was also forced to raise £3,000 ($15,000) from another bond issue in 1883. The remaining outstanding repair costs were retired from earnings over the next several years. (At one point, Brydges had to sign a personal guarantee on a note to cover accounts due!) The debt was finally retired in 1887 and it was only after this that the company was able to resume dividend payments. Even then the rate was fixed at the nominal level of one and three-quarters per cent and never exceeded two per cent in following years.

Unfortunately, for the bridge company, it had sold the profitable Assiniboine bridge and toll revenues from the Red River bridge dropped off sharply in 1883, after which the operation generally barely broke even. Following the flood of 1882 the Winnipeg construction boom collapsed and the heavy movement of construction materials over the bridge virtually ceased. In 1885, Brydges complained:

> The revenue was $6302.17 showing again a falling off — Business throughout the year was very greatly depressed, There was very little building carried on in Winnipeg last year rendering the Saint Boniface brick yards almost idle. The burning of Southerlands saw mill had also an injurious effect upon the traffic across the Bridge.

Had it not been for the laying of a railway track to service the HBC flour mill, the bridge company's future would have been even more dismal. The spur line, laid in 1885 by the Canadian Pacific Railway from St Boniface, allowed the HBC mill to compete more effectively with Ogilvie's new mill at Point Douglas and provided the bridge with extra revenue, although according to Brydges, the returns to the bridge company were woefully inadequate. At issue was the toll to be charged on grain cars crossing the bridge, an issue offering an interesting sidelight on the internal rivalries between the HBC Land and Trade Departments. The two departments operated separately and it was in the interests of each to maximize its profit. Joseph Wrigley, the Trade Commissioner, naturally wanted the tolls set as low as possible. Brydges, on the other hand, wanted high tolls, arguing that the Land Department and bridge company would incur costs (lands for railway allowance, rails and wear and strain on bridge). He intimated that appropriate charges might be $4.00 for a loaded car and $2.00 for an empty one, but since the HBC would be moving cars in bulk, then $3.00 and $1.75 would be acceptable. After appealing the matter to London, Brydges was forced to accept charges of $1.75 for loaded cars and 50 cents for empties. In future years revenues from the rail traffic generally generated something over $1,000 or about fifteen per cent of the bridge revenues. Without this source of revenue the bridge company would seldom have broken even.

Ordinary traffic across the bridge never approached the high levels it had reached during the first year of operation despite a recovery in the economy. This was due in part to the opening of the transcontinental railway and the arrival of immigrants at the Main Street station instead of St Boniface. However, another important factor was the construction of additional new bridges in the vicinity of the Red River bridge. In 1892 another private syndicate, the Norwood Improvement Company, had constructed a pontoon bridge across the Red to promote their land holdings in Norwood. The floating bridge, replaced by a permanent structure in the following year, diverted traffic from the south-east across to Fort Rouge and over the Main Street (Assiniboine) bridge, costing the Red River bridge about $2,000 a year in lost revenues. Ironically, the Norwood Syndicate had sought and received advice from the Red River Bridge Company on its operations shortly beforehand. Possibly the advice given was negative, but the Norwood Syndicate went ahead — much to the annoyance of Clarence Chipman, who had assumed Brydges' position as president of the bridge company after Brydges' death in 1889. Chipman sought legal advice in obtaining an injunction against the Norwood project and was informed he had no case.

Annual profits temporarily improved a little in the last years of the century when longer ice-free seasons extended the bridge's period of use, but soon declined when in 1901 the Canadian Northern Railway built its bridge over the Red River and provided free passage to pedestrian traffic. The marginal rates of

Manitoba Archives

The Red River or Broadway bridge, c. 1900.

return eventually caught up with the operation because repairs were kept to an absolute minimum. As a result, in 1903 it became necessary to take out a substantial loan of $30,000 to pay for extensive renovations.

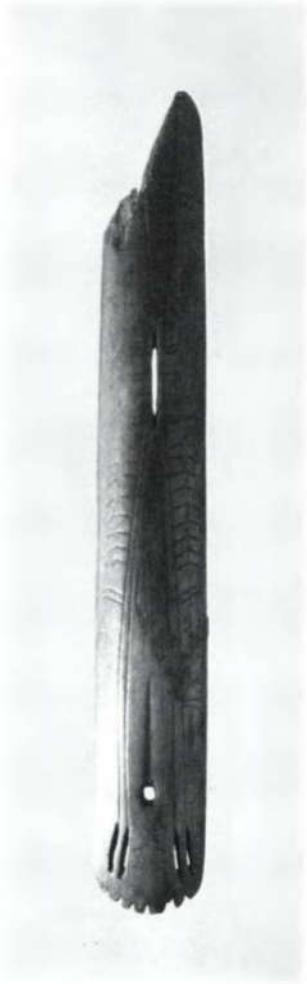
With little prospect of long-term profit, the HBC was quite receptive when the Town of St Boniface expressed an interest in buying the bridge. However, the Town's offer of $50,000 was unacceptable, London wanted $100,000 at least and only brought down its demand when advised that the bridge was not worth that amount. In 1906 St Boniface and the City of Winnipeg approached the province for support in building a new bridge at McDermot, and to acquire the Norwood bridge. Finally, when it was rumoured that the Canadian government was considering giving support for a combined rail and road bridge at the foot of Lombard Street, the HBC capitulated, selling the Red River bridge to St Boniface for a mere $59,000 — just enough to cover the bonded debt. The shareholders received nothing.

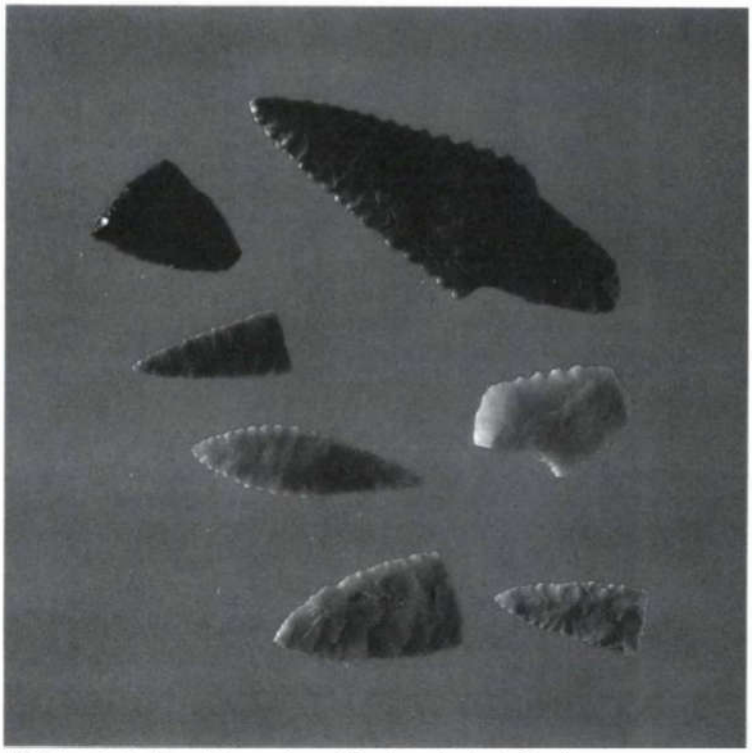
As an independent business, the Red River and Assiniboine Bridge Company has to be considered a failure. Profits looked good in the first year or two of operations, but as soon as other bridges came into use, revenues rapidly declined. Had the Red River bridge not been carried away, even the lower revenues might have given a reasonable return on investment. However, the substantial repair costs increased the debt load and diluted the stock. Revenues were high enough to pay interest on the debt, and bond holders also saw their capital returned in full when the bridge company wound up its affairs. Shareholders were much less fortunate. The stock seldom paid dividends above a nominal sum and in several years the shareholders received nothing. They also lost their initial investment.

It is impossible to say how much the Hudson's Bay Company indirectly benefited from its subsidiary's operations. The Trade Department probably received a form of subsidy on its flour milling business and the Company's store on Main Street undoubtedly attracted customers who used the bridges when visiting Winnipeg. The Land Department's lot sales in the Reserve were no doubt improved by the presence of the bridges. However, it must be remembered that sales reached their peak in the wild speculative boom of the early 1880s. After the disastrous flood of 1882 and the collapse of the boom, many buyers forfeited their land. The low-lying property near the bridges could not be sold except to railway interests who built their own bridges. Until then the land was virtually undeveloped.

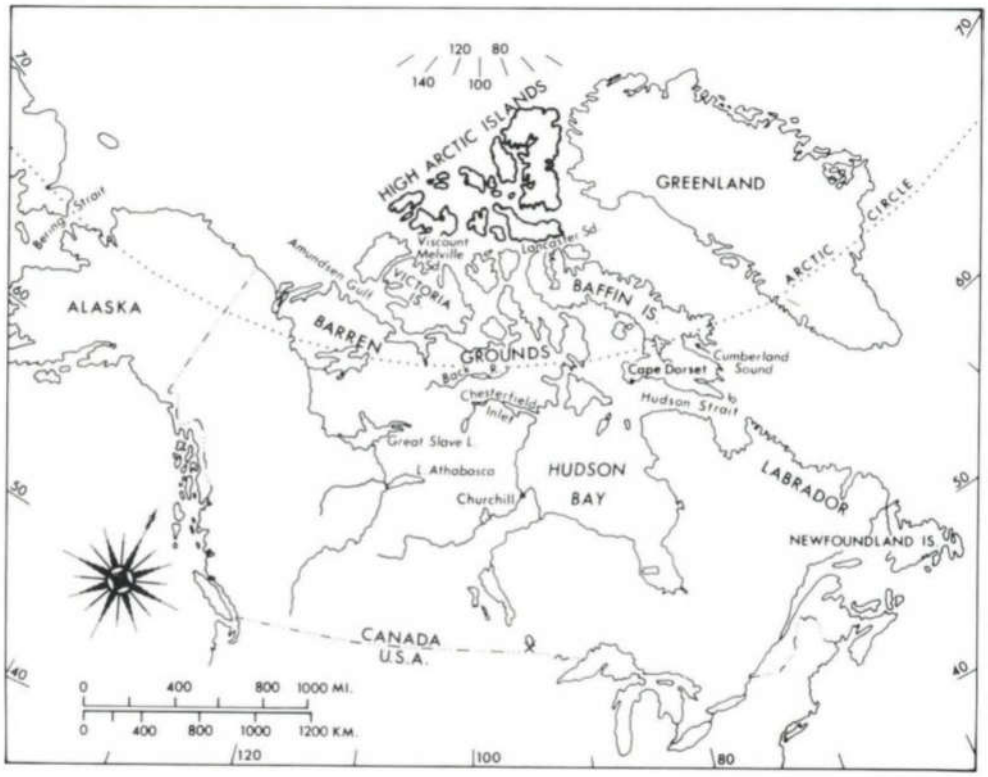
The bridges probably did more to benefit landowners with property in St Boniface and Fort Rouge than the Hudson's Bay Company. Their holdings were given appreciably better access to the city as a result. Regional road access was also improved. The HBC and its bridge company therefore made a significant contribution to the city's infrastructure, although this was not the motive for Brydges' proposals. ◆

This antler is one of the few decorated artifacts known to survive from the first hunting groups to move east across Arctic Canada: the Arctic Small Tool tradition people. It was found in a Banks Island site dated around 1500 B.C., and its use is not known.





Miniature tools chipped from coloured flint by early Arctic Small Tool tradition hunters; the largest object is only 55mm long.



The Prehistory and Prehistoric Art of the Canadian Inuit

By Robert McGhee

Dr McGhee is an archaeologist with the National Museum of Man's Archaeological Survey of Canada.
All photographs are by the author, unless otherwise indicated.

OVER THE PAST THREE DECADES there has been a growing interest in the art forms being produced by the Inuit of Arctic Canada. In the early days of this phenomenon there were many naive statements made by collectors, and claims made by dealers, that Inuit soapstone carving was the culmination of an artistic tradition which had gradually developed over the centuries, or even over millennia of prehistoric time. Another view, and one which is more fashionable today, treats Inuit art as an entirely new art form, rapidly evolving, changing as it grows, developing its own traditions, and which can be appreciated without reference to its origins or to the past.

Neither of these views is entirely satisfactory. We do not find soapstone carvings, nor the remains of any other modern art forms, on archaeological sites of the later prehistoric period; these developments belong to the mid-twentieth century. Nevertheless, although there is little resemblance between modern art forms and those of the prehistoric past, art has been produced in Arctic Canada for the last 4,000 years. Over this period the art took many forms. There was no simple development over time, either in Inuit culture or in its arts; yet perhaps some of these arts may have expressed concepts similar to those of modern Inuit art. A brief sketch of the history of the Canadian Inuit and of their art may serve as a useful background in appreciating the artistic productions of the Inuit today.

The Arctic seen by the first Inuit was probably very similar in most respects to that of the present day. By about 8,000 years ago the glaciers of the last Ice Age had retreated to the mountains of Labrador and the eastern arctic islands, where they remain today as relics of the Pleistocene. By this time whales and smaller sea mammals had penetrated the bays and channels of the arctic coast, and the tree-line was moving rapidly northward to well beyond its present position. To the north of tree-line the animals of the tundra were becoming established. Caribou and muskoxen, and the wolves and foxes which preyed upon and scavenged their herds, must have moved into the Arctic by this time, and waterfowl were probably establishing summer nesting areas. These animals were followed by Indian hunters who, by 8,000 years ago, were travelling northward along the coast of Labrador and in the Barren Grounds to the west of Hudson Bay. Our archaeological evidence suggests, however, that these Indians did not winter on the tundra, but stayed close enough to tree-line so that they could retreat to the forest which provided fuel and shelter from the arctic winter. For several thousand years the arctic mainland and the arctic archipelago remained uninhabited, not through lack of food resources, but because the human knowledge needed to survive the winter in this bleak land was lacking.

Such knowledge, however, was being developed far to the west, probably in the north-eastern regions of Siberia. Here, Neolithic hunters of the northern Asiatic forests may have discovered the rich sea-mammal resources of the Bering Sea coast, and decided that they could winter in the area while subsisting on sea-mammal meat and fat stored from the summer hunt. Their traditional cultures may already have developed tailored skin clothing which allowed them to better insulate themselves from the winter cold and wind; these conditions the Indians survived only through the use of wood fires within the shelter of the forest. Or perhaps the factor which first allowed full-time occupation of the tundra was merely the development of attitudes which placed a higher value on being well fed than on being warm and dry. It is interesting to note that the Chipewyan Indians with whom Samuel Hearne travelled the Barren Grounds during the 1770s treated hunger as a joke but, wretchedly clothed, they were greatly inconvenienced by cold and wet weather. On the other hand, Europeans have always been impressed by the ability of the Inuit to live and work cheerfully in appalling weather conditions; the greatest fear of the traditional Inuit family was not cold, but inadequate supplies of food. Perhaps the development of the attitude that body heat should be supplied by food, that energy should be used internally and conserved by insulating clothing rather than externally through the use of wood fires, helped to develop the first permanent habitation of the tundra regions.

If such an attitude had been evolved in the cultures of early Siberian hunters, the arctic tundras and coasts of North America were certainly good areas in which to put it into practice. Although the Arctic may seem barren to the modern urban dweller — and perhaps even more so to the farmer — to a hunter, the Arctic is a relatively productive place to live and work. Although the Arctic supports a small number of animal species relative to temperate and tropical regions, these animals occur in large numbers and dense seasonal congregations which can be very efficiently exploited by a hunting population. The cold temperatures of the region allow meat to be easily stored for a time when resources are scarce, either on a seasonal basis or over a period of years. Once a hunter knows the country, knows where to find the summer fish runs and the autumn caribou-migration routes and the spots where sea mammals congregate during the winter, he is in a better situation than many of his southern compatriots.

The remains of the first camps of such tundra and coastal hunters are found in western Alaska in the centuries just prior to 2000 B.C. By the latter date, similar camps existed across the arctic coast of Canada and in northern Greenland. Today, the sites of these camps are marked by rings of stones or gravel which once held down the edges of their tents, and by stone slabs which formed a hearth and storage areas within the tents. The arrangement of the central hearth and storage areas, in a mid-passage arrangement separating working or sleeping areas on either side of the tent, resembles an old Eurasiatic house style which survived among the Lapps of northern Europe until the nineteenth century, and probably reflects the Asiatic ancestry of the first arctic hunters. Around the remains of such camps we find scatters of chipped flint tools: points for arrows or spears, knives, scrapers and burins, which have led archaeologists to call this culture the Arctic Small Tool tradition (an unwieldy name usually shortened to ASTt).

The early ASTt people may have been attracted eastward across Arctic Canada by the presence of animals which had never been hunted, and which were therefore more curious about than wary of human hunters. For whatever reason, these people seem to have established a thin veneer of occupation throughout most of the area within a very few centuries. They adapted their subsistence economy to the resources of local areas, in some regions concentrating on the hunting of muskoxen, in others on seals, while in some camps we find that most of the refuse bones are those of waterfowl, fox and other small game. Apparently lacking dog-sleds, snow-houses, oil lamps and float-harpoons, their economy seems to have been more insecure, and their life more uncomfortable, than that of more recent Inuit.

We do not usually expect to find evidence of artistic activity among people living this meagre sort of life, and indeed very few carvings or engravings on bone are known from the ASTt. On the other hand, their chipped flint tools and weapon points are surprisingly well and carefully made, and may approach what we could call an art form. The chipping of flint is one of mankind's oldest crafts; yet very few cultures have developed the skills of the ASTt people in handling this intractable material. It is apparent that ASTt craftsmen were interested in more than the functional aspects of stone tools; they selected multicoloured flints, chipped them very evenly and symmetrically, often with decorative edge serration, and their extremely small size suggests that there was a high value on the skill necessary to create such miniature pieces. If we can call this an art form, it would appear to have been one perfectly suited to the life-style of the ASTt people: useful, portable, and probably increasing the interest and significance of the everyday hunting and household tasks for which the tools were used.

After about 1500 B.C. the climate of Arctic Canada began to deteriorate from conditions which may have been slightly warmer than those of the present day. Cooler summers may have allowed an increase in the thickness and extent of sea ice, thus restricting the ranges and populations of seals and other sea mammals. Land mammal populations may have been reduced as well, or their migration routes suddenly and unexpectedly changed, especially in areas such as the Barren Grounds where the tree-line retreated south by over 200 kilometres after what appears to have been a disastrous series of fires. About this time ASTt people abandoned some areas, including the north coast of Greenland and the High Arctic Islands north of Lancaster Sound. Others began to move into the interior of the Barren Grounds and became caribou hunters, displacing for several centuries the traditional Indian occupants of the region as far south as Great Slave Lake and Lake Athabasca.

During the first millennium B.C., in the context of increasingly severe climate and ice conditions, the ASTt people of Baffin Island, northern Hudson Bay and Hudson Strait developed more efficient hunting techniques, what appears to have been a more secure and sedentary way of life, new types of tools and new forms of art. Together, these new elements formed what is known archaeologically as the Dorset culture, named for Cape Dorset where the culture was first recognized. During the following centuries the Dorset people spread out from their relatively rich home area, reoccupying the islands of the High Arctic, moving down the Labrador coast to form the primary occupation of the island of Newfoundland for almost a millennium, and occasionally extending their territory westward as far as the eastern shores of

A set of ivory animal teeth, designed to be worn in the mouth of a Dorset shaman.

The Dorset shaman used a small drum with wooden rim, such as this specimen from Bylot Island.

A Dorset masquette in ivory, 35mm high, from Arctic Quebec.

Amundsen Gulf. Although some of these areas were occupied only sporadically, the Dorset way of life dominated Arctic Canada for almost 2,000 years.

The Dorset people lived in settlements which appear to have been larger and more permanent than those of their ASTt ancestors. In some areas they built semi-subterranean winter houses with turf walls, while in others they seem to have used domed snow-houses heated with oil lamps carved from soapstone. Both types of structures must have been vast improvements over the tents heated with small fires of driftwood and animal bones which seem to have been the winter dwellings of the early ASTt people. There is some evidence that they now possessed kayaks, and the bones found around their camps indicate that they were efficient hunters of sea mammals as large as walrus and narwhal. In some regions they killed large numbers of caribou, and may have built some of the stone drive-lanes used by later Inuit caribou hunters.

Perhaps it was the increased security provided by this new way of life which allowed or encouraged the development of a new art form: the carving of small figures in ivory or wood. The majority of Dorset carvings represent animals, occasionally humans, and perhaps spirits, both in realistic and in highly abstract forms. Most scholars interpret Dorset art objects as intimately connected to shamanistic religious practices similar to those described by anthropologists for many people around the northern world. Items such as life-sized wooden masks, drums and sucking tubes were almost certainly used by the shaman. Miniature harpoon heads may have been magical weapons, and

P. Schledermann

A well-preserved Early Dorset tent, showing the mid-passage arrangement built of vertical slabs of rock.

The remains of winter houses are marked by four rectangular patches of vegetation at this Late Dorset site on southern Ellesmere Island.

This piece of caribou antler is covered with carvings of approximately sixty faces. A few similar objects have been found at other Late Dorset sites.

An ivory carving of a bear, found at a Late Dorset site on Bathurst Island.

Dorset ivory carving of two men wrestling.

figures of humans and bears with a hole in the chest or throat, sometimes containing a sliver of wood, were probably associated with attempts at sympathetic magic.

Other items are not so clearly associated with shamanism, but may have been objects of magical power. In this category we might place carvings of bears, more or less stylized but consistently engraved with lines representing elements of the animal's skeleton and joints. It has been suggested that these 'X-ray' figures may represent the helping bear spirit of the shaman rather than an actual bear. Other such objects are pieces of caribou antler covered with carvings of up to sixty faces, perhaps representing the people in a local community, the patients whom a shaman had cured, or the spirits upon which the shaman could call. Naturalistic carvings of animals — bears, falcons, caribou, muskoxen — and occasionally of humans, may not have been associated with magic; yet many of these are perforated so that they could be hung from a string, and may have been worn as personal amulets. The rarest form of Dorset art is found along the Hudson Strait coast of northern Quebec. Here, at a few localities, cliffs of soapstone have been carved with numerous human faces, similar to the clusters of faces on antler tines found elsewhere.

Although carvings occur in all phases of Dorset culture, there appears to have been a major increase in the numbers and variety produced during the closing centuries of the Dorset period, somewhere between 500 and 1000 A.D. This was also the period in which Dorset culture reached its maximum extent, expanding northward to reoccupy the High Arctic as far as north-western Greenland. At the end of this

expansion, however, Dorset culture disappeared from all areas except Arctic Quebec where Dorset people appear to have survived for a few more centuries.

This remarkably sudden disappearance of a population which had occupied Arctic Canada for three millennia can best be explained in terms of a well-documented historical event: the invasion of the area by Alaskans, the ancestors of the modern Canadian Inuit. Inuit legend states that when their ancestors came to Arctic Canada they found it occupied by a race of people called *Tunit*, whom the Inuit eventually killed or drove away. The legend supports the archaeological evidence of Dorset disappearance, and perhaps explains what occurred approximately 1,000 years ago. From the *Tunit* the invading Inuit may have learned how to build domed snow-houses, learned the locations of soapstone quarries from which they could carve lamps and cooking pots; and a few other elements of Dorset culture that may have found their way into the culture of the Inuit. It is also possible that some Dorset people were incorporated into the Inuit population, although there is presently no evidence to support this idea.

The ultimate origin of the Alaskan Inuit is still uncertain. They may have developed from ASTt people who remained in western and northern Alaska after their relatives had moved east to Arctic Canada, or they may have originated in an older population which had settled the Pacific coast of Alaska approximately 10,000 years ago during the closing stages of the Bering Land Bridge. In either case, we know that by about 2,500 years ago ancestral Inuit were living in western Alaska, and were gradually developing the efficient open-water hunting techniques which led to the sophisticated Old Bering Sea culture on both sides of Bering Strait in the centuries around 1 A.D. These people had kayaks and larger skin boats, float harpoons which allowed them to easily kill large sea mammals, and their consequent ability to accumulate and store food for the winter allowed them to build large permanent villages. These villages, some of which were inhabited for several centuries, were composed of large semi-subterranean, log-walled houses, covered with turf for insulation, and heated by lamps burning sea-mammal oil.

The ivory carvings and complex engraving style of the Old Bering Sea people have been justly celebrated since the first artifacts were discovered about fifty years ago. The artistic styles, as well as those of the contemporaneous and vaguely related Ipiutak people of northern Alaska, have been compared with, and tenuously linked to, styles emanating from Indian cultures of the Northwest Coast and with those of eastern Asia and northern China. They are decidedly different from, and show no relationship to, the contemporaneous styles of Dorset art in Arctic Canada, being much less clearly linked with shamanistic activities. The fact that the most highly decorated objects are generally weapons for sea-mammal hunting suggests that perhaps the art of the early Alaskan Inuit may, rather, have been associated primarily with hunting magic.

Ivory weapons of the Old Bering Sea culture. The butterfly-shaped object may have been a harpoon rest from the front of a hunting boat.

By about 1,000 years ago the Inuit of North Alaska had learned to hunt the large bowhead whales which migrate eastward each spring through narrow leads in the ice close to the North Alaskan coast. At approximately the same time, the climate throughout the northern hemisphere began to warm rapidly. In Europe, zones of agriculture moved northward, and the warming climate has been suggested as a cause for the contemporaneous Norse expansion out of Scandinavia. The relatively calm and ice-free sailing conditions which allowed the Norse to reach Greenland and the eastern coast of North America may also have encouraged a wave of Inuit expansion eastward across the Arctic. When the Inuit and Norse met, probably in northern Greenland at some time during the twelfth century A.D., mankind had first circled the arctic world.

These immigrant whale hunters, the ancestors of the Inuit, are known to archaeologists as the Thule culture, named for the area in north-western Greenland where their remains were first recognized. Travelling and hunting in open skin-covered boats up to ten metres long, and in winter by dog-sled, the Thule people seem to have moved across the entire Arctic within one or two centuries. They established permanent winter villages similar to those of their Alaskan ancestors, but their houses were now built of stone and whale bones rather than driftwood logs,

Thule snow goggles, carved from ivory and decorated with incised lines.

Ivory needle case and thimble holder, from a Thule site on northern Ellesmere Island.

Thule winter village on Bathurst Island. The whale bones are the collapsed roof supports of the winter houses. Below is a Thule winter house with the roof reconstructed after excavation.

which were not available in most areas of their new country. The villages were smaller than those of Alaska, and most appear to have been occupied for a shorter length of time. Adapting their Alaskan hunting technology to the conditions of local areas, they seem to have been capable in most regions of maintaining a way of life comparable to that of their relatives in Alaska.

The art of the Thule people, like their technology, is largely based on Alaskan traditions. Thule sculptures are relatively rare compared to those produced by their Dorset predecessors, and made in a very few standardized forms. Most are simple silhouette figures in wood or ivory, representing women with flat uncarved faces and stumpy arms; some of these may have been children's dolls, and others perhaps amulets or charms. Another standardized form consists of small birds or birds with women's heads, carved with a flat base so that they resemble birds sitting on the water; all are made from ivory or sea-mammal tooth, and in the historic period similar objects were used in a hand-game. The occasional toggle or line-stopper carved in the form of an animal's head, and a few small whale effigies, make up most of the remainder of Thule sculptural art.

The Thule people did, however, add engraved designs to many of their artifacts: single or double marginal lines, sometimes joined with hatch-marks or ticks, 'Y' designs or stick-figure humans, and occasional representations of animals or entire panels showing hunting and camp scenes. The majority of such decoration is found on ivory objects, and mostly on either weapons used in hunting sea mammals, or tools and other objects associated with women, such as needle cases, combs and decorative pendants. I

Thule ivory carvings from Bathurst Island: two chains and two pendants.

Engraved fighting scene from an ivory bow drill recovered from a Thule grave near Arctic Bay.

have argued elsewhere that the use of ivory in the manufacture of such objects, and perhaps the related decoration, is associated with the Thule view of the world as dimly reflected in the mythology and religion of their descendants of the historic period. We may suggest, for example, that the Thule world view was based on a set of contrasts between, on the one hand, things associated with women, the sea, sea-mammal hunting, and perhaps winter life; and on the other hand things associated with men, land animals, and perhaps summer life on the land. Thus, for example, most Thule harpoon heads are made from ivory or sea-mammal bone, while all arrowheads used for hunting caribou are made from caribou antler. Such contrasting oppositions are in accord with ethnographic descriptions of historic Inuit religion, in which they played an important role. Perhaps in the relatively affluent Thule villages, such a world view could be expressed through technology and through the associated decorative art, which is most often linked with ivory weapons and women's tools.

What happened to the Thule people? Five centuries ago their winter villages, supplied with food and fuel accumulated during the summer open-water hunting of sea mammals, were scattered across most of Arctic Canada. Yet by the time that European explorers began to penetrate the area in the eighteenth century, much of the region was unoccupied and in the inhabited regions people were following a more nomadic life in small bands, living in tent camps during the summer and in temporary winter villages of snow-houses. Only in Labrador, south-western Greenland and in some parts of Baffin Island did something like a Thule life-style continue.

The most likely explanation for this change involves a climatic deterioration, the onset of the Little Ice Age which, between approximately 1600 and 1850 A.D. affected the entire northern hemisphere. Throughout Europe there were disastrous crop failures, the sea ice in the vicinity of Iceland became much more severe than during the preceding centuries, and similar conditions must have occurred in arctic North America. Shorter ice-free summer seasons and increasing amounts of both fast and drift ice in most regions must have decreased the range of whales and other large sea mammals, and also made hunting more difficult. Faced with this sudden and unexpected change in their environment, various regional groups of Inuit reacted in different ways.

The islands of the High Arctic were abandoned, except for the dwindling population of Polar Eskimos clustered around the open water and bird cliffs of north-western Greenland. Through most of the Central Arctic, summer sea hunting must have become increasingly difficult, and people began to look to the interior for summer food supplies. Small bands consisting of one or a few families began to wander inland, fishing in the lakes and rivers, intercepting the caribou migrations, and occasionally hunting muskoxen and other animals. Following such a pattern, they could not accumulate or transport enough food to last through the winter in the permanent winter villages of their ancestors. In most areas, winter life depended primarily on hunting the small ringed seal, which winters beneath the ice and can be caught at leads and breathing holes. In order to hunt these animals efficiently, the Inuit needed temporary villages of snow-houses, which could be abandoned when the local seal population had been

hunted out. The technology and knowledge necessary for these new hunting and living patterns had been developed during Thule times, but the onset of colder climatic conditions now rapidly increased their importance.

There may have been a general population decline as people tried to adjust to the new conditions, although we cannot be certain of this, as our knowledge of Thule population size is very vague. Many elements of Thule technology disappeared; items such as large skin boats and whaling gear were simply no longer useful, and were abandoned and forgotten in most areas. In the Central Arctic, kayaks were adapted for river hunting of caribou and were no longer used for sea hunting. Among the Polar Eskimos the art of kayak construction was lost, and they also seem to have forgotten the use of the bow and the fish spear. At the same time, there was a general and drastic decrease in the amount and quality of plastic and decorative art being produced. It is difficult to understand why this should have occurred. The usual explanation is that, with deteriorating environmental conditions, people were so busy making a living that there was no time left over for artistic activities. This cannot be true, however, since poor weather forces long periods of inactivity in any arctic hunting camp. Although there must still have been plenty of time to carve, perhaps the increasing insecurity of life produced a lack of will, a simple decline in interest in applying the customary decorations to hunting weapons and sewing tools. This lack of interest may have extended to other spheres of life, such as mythology and religion; those of the Canadian Inuit of the historic period were generally much less complex than those of their Alaskan and Greenlandic relatives, perhaps due to an improverishment which occurred during the Little Ice Age.

Another possible cause for the decline of art in this period lies in contact with European technology which penetrated the entire area during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, usually far ahead of the Europeans themselves. In some parts of the world, such as the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, the introduction of metal tools may have led to a florescence in artistic activity. Among the Canadian Inuit, however, one has the impression that the new materials are associated with a decline in traditional art and even in traditional technology; as metal carving tools became increasingly available, traditional artifacts made with these tools were not as skilfully done or finely finished as those made in earlier times when metal was scarce. One can only speculate on the influence of an obviously superior technology on a people whose tools and weapons had always been considered to be more efficient and sophisticated than those of any others in the known world. Only when direct contact with Europeans occurred, and a market was established for Inuit carvings and engravings, do we find the rebirth of these art forms.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that there was no simple and direct development of prehistoric Inuit culture or art in Arctic Canada. The Inuit are often naively seen as people who, over the millennia, have gradually developed a life-style finely adapted to their harsh environment, and an artistic tradition reflecting that way of life. Such a view makes it difficult to understand the nature of Inuit life and art. Archaeology shows that the Canadian Inuit are relatively recent immigrants to the area, arriving from Alaska during the past millennium and bringing with them a rich and sophisticated hunting culture. Their artistic traditions were developed in the Bering Sea area, and were perhaps influenced both by the artistic styles of Bronze Age Asia and those of the Indian cultures of north-western North America. Arriving in Arctic Canada, they met and were perhaps influenced by the Dorset people, whose ancestors had inhabited the area for 3,000 years and developed a unique way of life and fascinating and compelling art styles. As recently as 500 years ago the Canadian Inuit had a productive and relatively secure economy, and a culture perhaps as advanced as that of any other hunting people on earth. Only during the few centuries prior to European contact was this way of life reduced by the hazards of climatic change. The Inuit life described by early European explorers and anthropologists was not the culmination of thousands of years of gradual development, but of a recent and rapid adaptation to a deteriorating environment.

As part of this adaptation, Inuit plastic art practically disappeared for a period of a few centuries. Only in the 1950s did carving once again become a prominent activity. Although occasional carvings have been made for sale to Europeans for the past century, the florescence of the past three decades has been in response to the creation of an organized export market which provided a continuing economic incentive for the production of carvings and other items. On the surface, these new forms of artistic expression bear little resemblance to those of the prehistoric past. Yet there was a great deal of variability among prehistoric art forms. The complex engraved decoration of the Old Bering Sea culture bears no closer relationship to the magical carvings of the Dorset people than it does to contemporary Inuit carving. In each of these cases, artistic activity appears to have been encouraged for different reasons, and to have used different modes of expression. In this context, modern Inuit art may be seen as an integral part of an Inuit artistic heritage, a heritage marked by diversity and occasional florescence rather than by gradual and uniform development. ◆

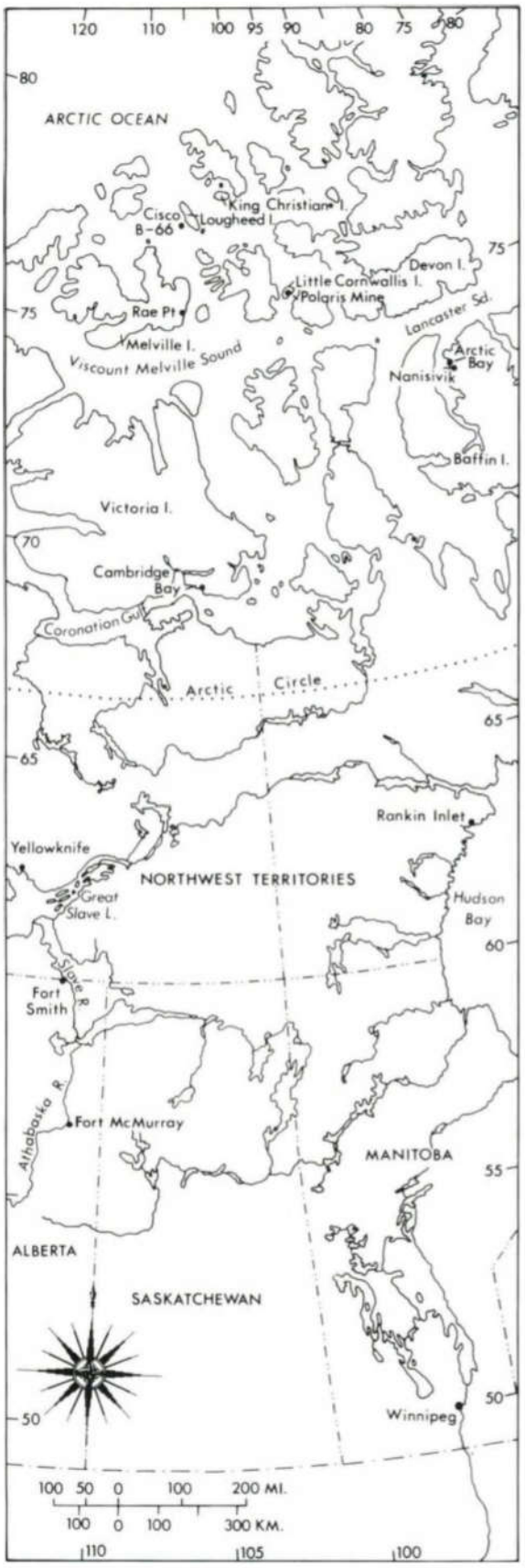
The Governor-General in ARCTIC CANADA

His Excellency Governor-General Edward Schreyer with Levi Kalluk, Mayor of Arctic Bay.

In April and May of this year, His Excellency the Governor-General visited a number of communities in the Northwest Territories, meeting with the people and touring oil and natural gas and mining installations.

He began his journey at Fort McMurray with a tour of the Syncrude Project. From there, on 1 May, he flew to Fort Smith and Yellowknife, then north to Cambridge Bay and beyond to Panarctic's High Arctic installations at Rae Point, Cisco B-66 and King Christian Island. At latitude 77°, he toured the site of Cominco's Polaris, the world's most northerly lead-zinc mine, scheduled to begin production in 1982.

Photographs, unless otherwise indicated, are by George Whitman, Public Affairs Manager, Hudson's Bay Company.



Panarctic Oils Ltd.

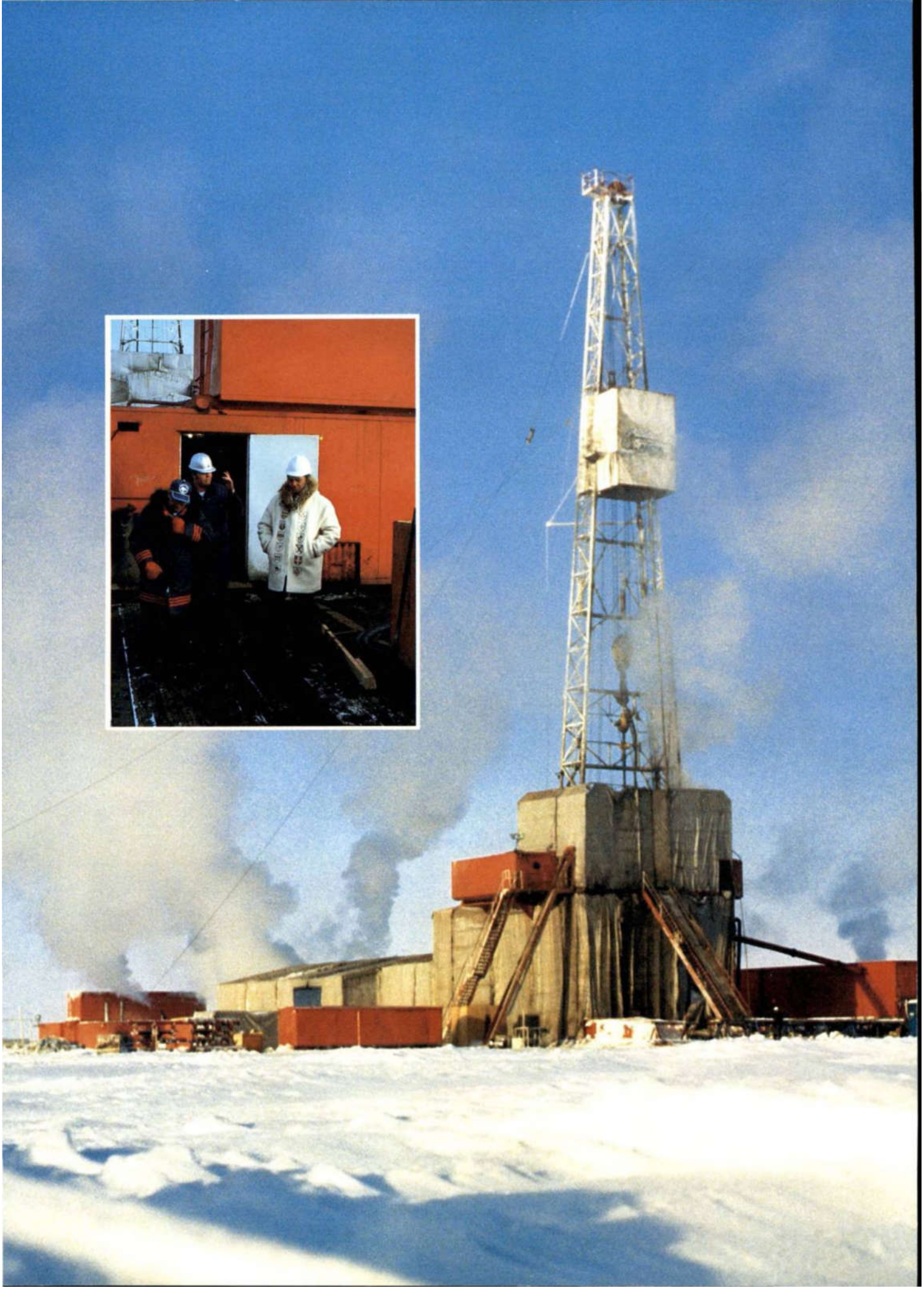
May 2, at Rae Point on Melville Island, the communications and transportation centre for Panarctic's widespread seismic and drilling operations in the High Arctic.

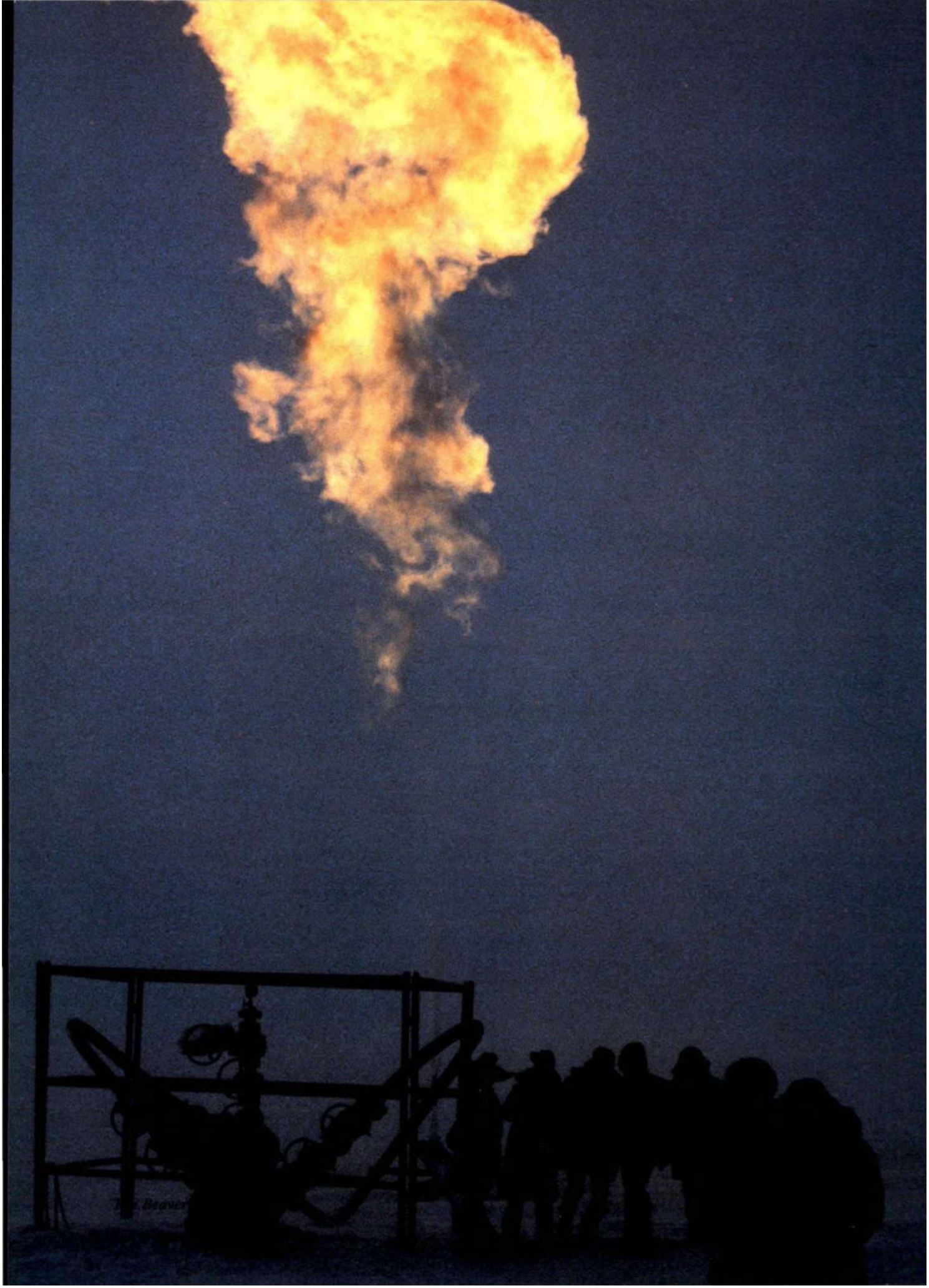
Right: Panarctic's Cisco B-66 well sits on an ice platform 16 kilometres off the west coast of Lougheed Island.

During the Governor-General's visit the well's drill pipe was pulled down. The well will be capped and abandoned until a transportation system is developed.

Cisco B-66 tested gas rates up to 9.7 million cubic feet per day, flowed oil from the King Christian sandstone level at the rate of 1,691 barrels per day and from the Awingak sandstone level at the rate of 1,465 barrels per day.

Insert, right: With the Governor-General at Cisco B-66 is John Parker, Commissioner of the Northwest Territories (left) and Knat Moleschi, site foreman at Cisco B-66.





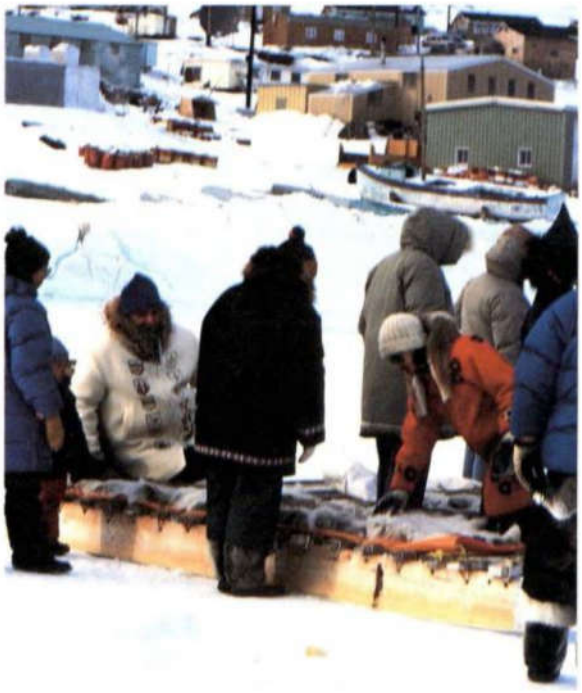
Polaris, Cominco's base metal mine on Little Cornwallis Island is scheduled to open in 1982.

A berth is under construction (right, centre) for the barge that will house power, processing and service facilities for the mine. This floating complex — including the zinc-lead concentrator — is being built at Trois Rivières, Québec, and will be towed north in August 1981.

Husky dogs are kept on the site to alert the staff to the presence of polar bears.

The photograph below shows in the foreground the adit or horizontal tunnel into the ore body. The Polaris operation will produce approximately 187,000 tonnes of zinc concentrate and 42,000 tonnes of lead concentrate annually.

In honour of the vice-regal visit, the capped well on King Christian Island is opened and the flare lit.



On Sunday, May 3, the Governor-General was driven by car from the mining community of Nanisivik on north Baffin Island to Arctic Bay. There the Inuit had arranged to share with him several aspects of their way of life: a ride by kamotik across the sea ice, a mug of hot tea in a snow-house, and a demonstration of their traditional games and singing.

Although the operation of the mine at Nanisivik, connected by road to the small (pop. 427) Arctic community, provides employment opportunities, the Inuit continue to hunt and trap along Admiralty Inlet.

On the morning of 4 May His Excellency toured Nanisivik, the community created by a mountain of lead-zinc ore high above Strathcona Sound.

From Baffin Island, he flew south to Rankin Inlet and Winnipeg, then on to Ottawa, returning on 5 May.

The Great Hall

The main square of reconstructed Old Fort William at Thunder Bay, Ontario. The newly built Great Hall is on the left.

By Bryan Eddington.

Author Eddington of Thunder Bay is a professional writer. Photographs, except where indicated, are from the Old Fort William Collection.

IN THE SUMMER of 1803, the first rendezvous was held at the inland headquarters of the North West Company. Here, at Fort William on Lake Superior, the wintering partners with their furs met agents with provisions from Montreal. After their long journeys from the west and from the east by canoe, and after the business meetings and decision making, the leading Nor'Westers relaxed in the dining room of the Great Hall.

Gabriel Franchère described the Great Hall after his stay at the fort 14 July 1814: 'In the middle of a spacious square rises a large frame house elegantly built and painted, raised about five feet above ground, with a verandah in front. This house is used as a mess or dining hall, about 60 feet long and 30 to 40 wide. At each end there are two small rooms used by the company's agents. The dining hall is hung with paintings and pastel portraits of a great number of the associates. Behind and adjacent to this hall are the kitchen and servants' quarters. It is in this hall that the agents, partners, clerks, interpreters, and guides take their meals together at different tables.'

'Together at different tables' symbolizes the rigid

at Old Fort William

The 'state and grandeur' of the North West Company in the early 1800s was evident in the lavish feasts and revels held at rendezvous time in the original Great Hall. Here, the cherry-wood table where the company directors were seated is once again in place.

social structure of Fort William; not for these 'lords of the lakes and forests', the democratic liberties of the newly born American republic to the south.

The principal director of the North West Company, William McGillivray, sat with other company officers along one side of the long, head table set with Irish linen, English crystal and Chinese porcelain, while the butler served wine and fine food prepared by a cook who had travelled by canoe from Montreal. From behind this elegance, the officers could look over the clerks, interpreters and guides who ate at trestle tables more appropriate to their lower station.

Following the dinner, the tables would be stacked quickly aside so the Nor'Westers could dance to the skirl of Scottish pipes and French-Canadian fiddles, whirling 'country' women in the candlelight.

Three years after Franchère's visit, the Irishman Ross Cox described that main room with awe: 'The dining-hall is a noble apartment, and sufficiently capacious to entertain two hundred. A finely executed bust of the late Simon M'Tavish is placed in it, with portraits of various proprietors. A full-length likeness of Nelson, together with a splendid painting of the battle of the Nile [Battle of Trafalgar], also decorates the walls. . . .

'At the upper end of the hall there is a very large map of the Indian country, drawn with great accuracy by Mr David Thompson, astronomer to the Company, and comprising all their trading posts, from the Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, and from Lake Superior to Athabasca and Great Slave Lake.'

This summer for the first time, the replica of the Great Hall in reconstructed Fort William is open to visitors. Its building is based on years of research; and its furnishings were chosen in close consultation with antique dealers. It was recognized from the beginning that the Great Hall was the focal point of the inland headquarters. It symbolized the grandeur of the North West Company and its accomplishments; exploring to the west coast and beyond, establishing trade routes through wilderness territory, and gaining the status of a business and political power in the new land of Canada. Its wintering partners spent their profits in New York with what Washington Irving

The scene inside the reconstructed blacksmith's shop.

A reconstruction of the house and trading centre operated by Jean-Marie Boucher. He made substantial profits, selling liquor and provisions to the voyageurs.

called 'a gorgeous prodigality'.

'To behold the Northwest Company in all its state and grandeur, however, it was necessary to witness an annual gathering at the great interior place of conference established at Fort William,' he wrote.

'. . . grave and weighty councils were alternated by huge feasts and revels, like some of the old feasts described in Highland castles. The tables in the great banqueting room groaned under the weight of game of all kinds; of venison from the woods, and fish from the lakes, with hunters' delicacies, such as buffaloes' tongues, and beavers' tails; and various luxuries from Montreal, all served up by experienced cooks brought for the purpose. There was no stint of generous wine, for it was a hard-drinking period, a time of loyal toasts, and bacchanalian songs, and brimming bumpers.

'On these occasions . . . the aristocratical character of the Briton shone forth magnificently, or rather the feudal spirit of the Highlander. Every partner who had charge of an interior post, and a score of retainers at his command, felt like the chieftain of a Highland clan, and was almost as important in the eyes of his dependents as of himself. To him a visit to the grand conference at Fort William was a most important event; and he repaired there as to a meeting of parliament.

'The partners from Montreal, however, were the lords of the ascendant; coming from the midst of luxurious and ostentatious life, they quite eclipsed their compeers from the woods, whose forms and faces had been battered and hardened by hard living and hard service, and whose garments and equipments were all the worse for wear. Indeed the partners from below considered the whole dignity of the company as represented in their persons, and conducted themselves in suitable style. They ascended the rivers in great state, like sovereigns making a progress: or rather like Highland chieftains navigating their subject lakes. They were wrapped in rich furs, their huge canoes freighted with every convenience and luxury, and manned by Canadian voyageurs, as obedient as Highland clansmen. They carried up with them cooks and bakers, together with delicacies of every kind, and abundance of choice wines for the banquets which attended this great convocation.'

The Great Hall with its symmetrical Georgian proportions provided the focal point for a neatly planned and thoroughly commercial community.

'On either side of this house are two others equally long but not so high,' wrote Franchère. 'They are

divided lengthwise by a corridor and each contains twelve attractive bedrooms. One is destined for the wintering partners, the other for the clerks.'

On the east side of the main square was another lodging house and a building where furs were inspected and repacked for shipment to Montreal. Behind the packing store were two fur warehouses and a stone powder magazine; behind the lodging house was a rough dormitory for guides, and a somewhat primitive hospital.

Franchère continued: 'On the west side is seen a range of buildings, some of which serve for stores and others for workshops; there is one for the equipment of men, another for the fitting out of canoes, one for the retail of goods, another where they sell liquors, bread, pork, butter, & c., and where a treat is given to the travellers who arrive. This consists in a white loaf, half a pound of butter, and a gill of rum. . . .

'Behind all this is another range, where we find the counting-house, a fine square building, and well-lighted; another storehouse of stone, tin-roofed; and a *jail*, not less necessary than the rest. The *voyageurs* give it the name of *pot au beurre* — the butter tub.'

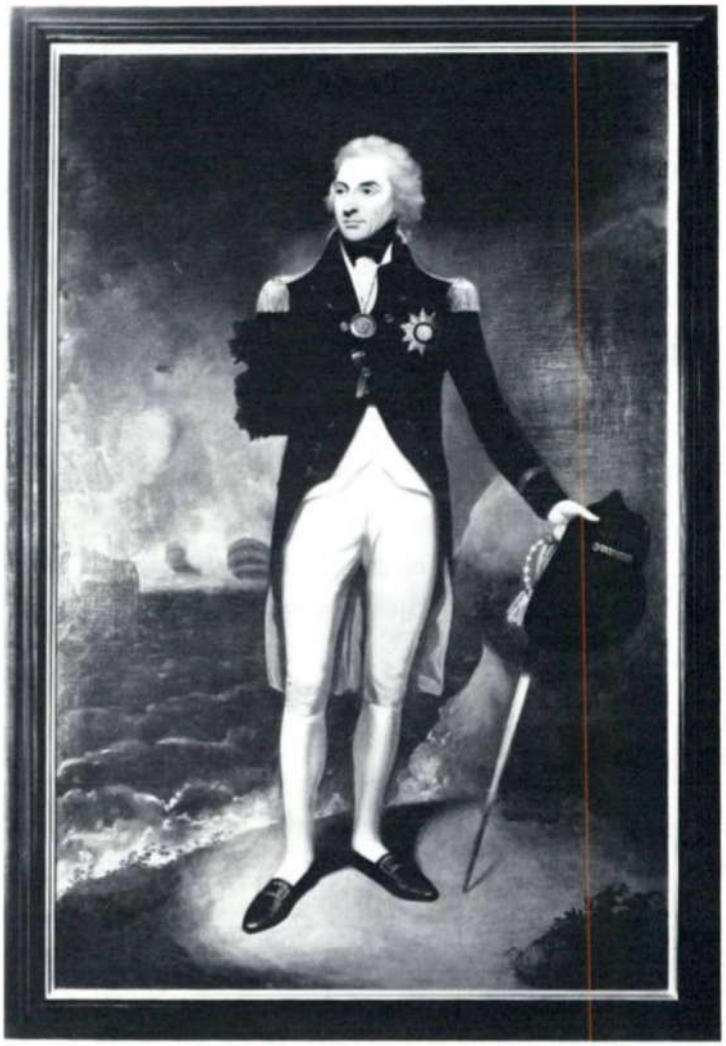
To the north of these buildings were those of the tradesmen: carpenter, cooper, tinsmith, blacksmith, armourer, tailor and canoe-builder, as well as their living quarters.

Along the south side of the main square were stores for corn and other provisions. Further south of this line, and on either side of the main entrance from the river, were apartments for the wintering partners and the ship's captain to the west; and to the east, the doctor's house and apothecary. Further west, along the river front, was the house of the fort superintendent, Mr Taitt, and a large shed where lake boats were built and repaired. East along the river front was the Indian shop, although in truth there was little local trading.

'As the river is deep at its entrance the company has had a wharf constructed, extending the whole length of the fort, for the discharge of the vessels which it keeps on Lake Superior, whether to transport its furs from Fort William to the *Saut Ste. Marie* or merchandise and provisions from *Saut Ste. Marie* to Fort William,' wrote Franchère. 'The land behind the fort and on both sides of it is cleared and under tillage. We saw barley, peas, and oats, which had a very fine appearance.'

Ross Cox noted: 'The kitchen garden is well-stocked, and there are extensive fields of Indian corn and potatoes. There are also several head of cattle, with sheep, hogs and poultry, etc, and a few horse for domestic use.'

Today, at the reconstructed fort, in the tradesmen's area are carpenters, tinsmiths and coopers plying their old crafts. In the counting house clerks use goose quills to write in heavy ledgers; at the farm a family sits around a rough table eating a hearty stew.



Hudson's Bay Company

This impressive life-sized portrait of Lord Nelson attributed to William Berczy, adorned the Great Hall before 1816. When Fort William was abandoned, the portrait and the painting of the Battle of Trafalgar were placed in the HBC Archives. This year the Hudson's Bay Company presented the paintings to Old Fort William, and they hang again in the Great Hall.

To simply list the buildings within the fort ignores the beautiful symmetry of the whole. Buildings either side of the Great Hall balance each other, as do the houses beside the main gate to the river. Within the tradesmen's area and the farm this symmetry is continued. Someone lovingly and painstakingly planned the exact location, size and appearance of each building so that this symmetry was maintained, long before the land was even drained. Unfortunately this planner is unknown but it is possible that McGillivray himself had a hand in it.

Franchère went on to describe a settlement on the opposite bank of the river which gives insight into the lives of aging voyageurs: 'There are also . . . a certain number of log-houses, all inhabited by old Canadian voyageurs, worn out in the service of the company without having enriched themselves. Married to women of the country and incumbered with large

families of half-breed children, these men prefer to cultivate a little Indian corn and potatoes and to fish for subsistence, rather than return to their native districts to give their relatives and former acquaintances certain proofs of their misconduct or their imprudence.'

On either side of the main fort there were the camps of voyageurs, separated apparently because there was some rough ill-feeling between the two groups. To the west were the winterers or *hivernants,* and to the east the men from Montreal, known as *mangeurs de lard* or pork-eaters.

'One perceives an astonishing difference between these two camps, which are composed sometimes of three or four hundred men each: that of the pork-eaters is always dirty and disorderly, while that of the winterers is always clean and neat,' noted Franchère.

Between the tent camp of the northerners and the neat buildings of the main fort there was a contrasting, pioneer-style log house; lodging and trade centre for Jean-Marie Boucher. The 1814 contract for this enterprising man allowed him to sell food, drink and other provisions to the voyageurs; for this he was guaranteed an income twice the wage of a guide, or one-third of total profits. Moneys remaining went to the company. Since even during the summer rendezvous voyageurs seem to have been supplied with only corn and grease, one suspects that most of their wages were spent at Boucher's establishment.

Wooden buildings within the fort were made of logs using a construction method known as *poteaux sur sole* (posts in the sill) or Red River frame. Here vertical posts were grooved to accept the tongues of horizontal logs. Timbers were usually squared and the joints secured with hardwood pegs. Key buildings were then finished with boards while others were simply whitewashed. The council house, counting house and Great Hall were covered with clapboards. Less important buildings such as the jail had dovetail corners.

Spaces between logs were filled with a mixture of clay, mud and straw, to which sand, hair or dung were sometimes added. Buildings were often plastered with clay for insulation.

Roof framing followed the kingpost truss system. Roofs were either gabled, hipped or bell-cast, and the roof had a pitch of 45 degrees to lessen the snow load. The roofs of stone houses were covered with tin; other buildings had either cedar shingles, shakes, board-on-board or bark.

The fort was obviously built as a showplace for the North West Company and there is no doubt that when complete it succeeded sufficiently to amaze and awe wilderness travellers as they stumbled hungry and tired from Indian country into an elegant, sophisticated and well-organized community.

The first inland headquarters of the North West Company was located at Grand Portage in present-day Minnesota. When this site became part of the United States, one of its partners, Roderick McKenzie, finally found a suitable location for the new headquarters post in 1798.

Some five years after McKenzie's rediscovery of the old Kaministikwia route, the first rendezvous was held at the new depot known as Fort William. Legal problems followed, however; and it seems that although the company bought the land from the Indians they were never able to get legal title to it. Five years later the North West Company was amalgamated with the Hudson's Bay Company and although the fort continued to be occupied, it no longer had the same importance. Certainly the Great Rendezvous was finished.

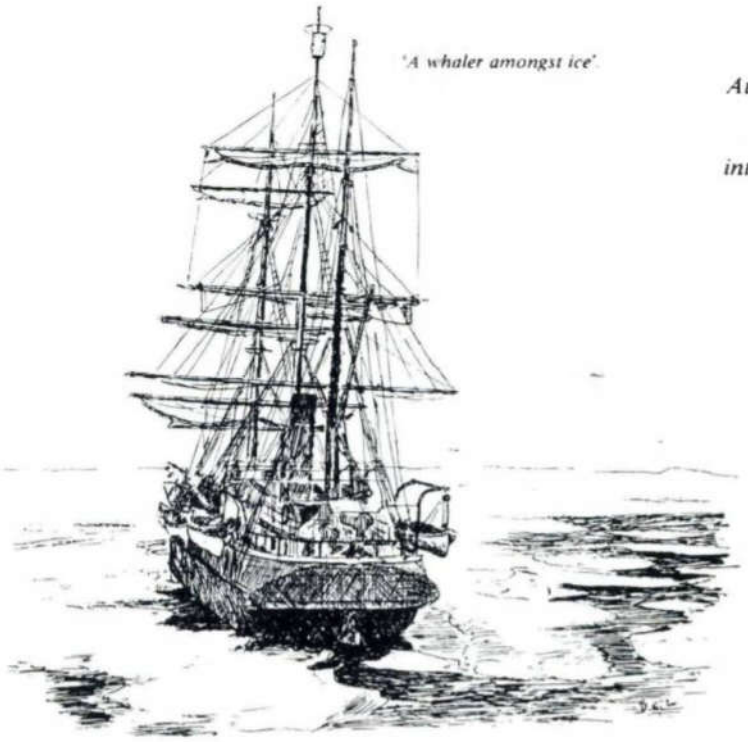
'The fur trade is forever lost to Canada,' wrote William McGillivray on his last visit to the fort in 1821.

By 1843 a Captain Lefroy was writing to his mother that 'Ranges of stores and sheds are empty, and the old mess house, sixty feet long, in which so many hardy traders used to tell of their exploits, is now a shed of canoes, half a ruin.' Five years later another traveller wrote: 'We hear of traditions of banquets, and crowds of clerks, and armies of hangers-on of all kinds. But all this has disappeared. . . . The old block house behind is falling to pieces, and the banqueting hall has probably been burnt up for firewood, at least, we saw nothing there that looked like it. Even the little flower garden opening out of the stone-paved courtyard was overgrown with weeds.'

In 1971, the retiring premier of Ontario, John Robarts, announced a plan to rebuild the old fort with its Great Hall, storehouses and farm. This announcement followed three years of excavation and study at the fort's original site. Today the replica of Old Fort William stands, not on its original site at the mouth of the Kaministikwia, but on Pointe de Meuron, a well-treed and secluded area upstream, where in 1816 Lord Selkirk's mercenaries encamped. The original site is now occupied by houses and a railway cleaning yard.

Today, to experience the authentic historical atmosphere of the fort, visitors leave their cars 350 yards away at a modern information area and either walk through a wooded area to the palisade or ride in a horse-drawn wagon. Once inside the palisade they enter a nineteenth-century world peopled with gentlemen, tradesmen and merchants, Métis and Ojibwa women, and rough engagés.

The replica of Fort William opens every year with a re-enactment of the voyageurs' arrival. The season will finally come to an end this year on 4 October when the voyageurs paddle away; just as they must have done at the end of summer in the early 1800s. ◆



'A whaler amongst ice'.

Author Kenn Harper has been associated with the Inuit of Baffin Island in various capacities for more than a decade. He developed his interest in the history of Cumberland Sound while teaching at Pangnirtung from 1969 to 1971.

The Moravian Mission at Cumberland Sound

By Kenn Harper

IN THE 1850s the Moravian Brethren, established in Greenland for over a century, briefly turned their eyes westward from their headquarters at New Herrnhut (on the site of the present-day Godthaab) across Davis Strait to Baffin Island. There, Eskimos were living who had never heard the gospel and the Moravians began to nurture a dream of expanding their northern mission into Cumberland Sound.

Cumberland Sound had recently been rediscovered by William Penny, a whaler from Peterhead, Scotland; in 1840 he had succeeded in finding the mouth of the sound, which had eluded whalers since John Davis had left it in 1587. Bowhead whales were plentiful in Cumberland Sound, and Scottish and American whalers were quick to begin their exploitation. Penny himself continued to be associated with whaling in the area until his retirement in 1863, save for a five-year interruption beginning in 1847 when he was involved in the search for Sir John Franklin. When Penny returned to whaling in 1852, it was to find that Americans had established a permanent winter settlement in the sound the previous year. Fervently anti-American, Penny, with a group of businessmen from Aberdeen, immediately formed the Royal Arctic Company, intending to establish a permanent settlement in Cumberland Sound from which to pursue whaling and mining. He also began to encourage the Moravians to send out a missionary from Greenland to attend to the education of the Eskimos.

At least one attempt to bring a Moravian missionary from Greenland to Cumberland Sound had been made before Penny's return to whaling. In 1851 Captain Parker of the *Truelove* had landed at Holsteinsborg on the west coast of Greenland on his way north to Baffin Bay. He proposed that, if the whaling were poor, he would return along the Greenland coast to New Herrnhut to take Brother Samuel Kleinschmidt across Davis Strait to Cumberland Sound. Nothing came of this plan, however, because Parker had a successful voyage north.

Brother Kleinschmidt, veteran Moravian missionary at New Herrnhut, wrote in 1851 about the failure of the plan and questioned whether the project could not better be undertaken from Labrador where the Brethren had established a mission at Nain in 1771. A suitable vessel, he suggested, could leave Labrador and cross successfully to Baffin Island, for Hudson Strait was not as difficult to cross as was Davis Strait. But the main advantage, Kleinschmidt said, in initiating the project from Labrador rather than Greenland was a political one: Labrador and Baffin Island were, nominally at least, both under the control of the British government, and that

government might be expected to lend more support to the expansion of a mission already established in its own territory.

Opinion was solicited from Labrador on the possibility of reaching Baffin Island from that coast. A letter from the mission at Okkak, dated 27 August 1852, stated that while they were given much satisfaction to learn of the exploratory visit, they could not offer a plan to 'meet the various obstacles which are likely to attend an attempt of this kind.'

Later that same year Brother August Freitag wrote from Nain:

> If I were ten years younger, and could leave my post at the time of the arrival of the vessel, I should consider it a great privilege to be permitted to accompany the expedition.

He recommended that a few Eskimos from Cumberland Sound should come to Labrador to live for a year or two at a Moravian settlement. To send a vessel as early as next year seemed undesirable.

At that point, the idea of sending out a missionary from Labrador seems to have been abandoned.

On 6 August 1853, William Penny sailed for Cumberland Sound from Aberdeen in command of three ships, the *Lady Franklin, Sophia* and *Prince Albert*. He hoped to establish a colony in the sound and had received authorization from the Moravian Mission Board to take a missionary from Greenland to promote 'the religious and temporal improvement of the Esquimaux population'. He intended to call at Lichtenfels, the Moravian mission established in 1758, to pick up Brother Mathias Warmow who would remain for the winter with Penny's party to evaluate the conditions of the natives in the sound. In the autumn of the following year the missionary would travel to Europe by whaling vessel to report to the elders of the church. Inclement weather intervened, however, and heavy ice prevented any of Penny's ships from reaching Lichtenfels. Penny went on to Cumberland Sound without Warmow, and took ten whales in a very successful season.

After wintering in Cumberland Sound, Penny returned to Aberdeen briefly in the summer of 1854, where he wrote a letter to the secretary of the Moravian Mission. In it, he described his attempt to reach Lichtenfels in the autumn of the previous year.

> On this very day twelvemonth, I was within a short distance of that settlement, with my ensign flying, when it suddenly began to blow a heavy gale, and I was compelled to tack the ship, and to run for the American shore. . . . On the 12th of September, we were between the islands, in Frobisher's Strait, and very narrowly escaped shipwreck. . . . We found a number of white people, chiefly from the United States, busily engaged in fishing, but, in a short time, the cholera broke out among them, and carried off nearly one third. During our summer fishing, we were surrounded by about 270 of the Esquimaux, who appeared to be simple, docile creatures, but prone to give way to evil influences. They expressed themselves very desirous to have a kind instructor living among them, who would tell them of their great Father in Heaven, and teach the young people to read, and I do hope that it may still be possible for you to supply one.

On 22 September, Penny again left Aberdeen for Cumberland Sound, and again failed to make a landfall at Lichtenfels.

The next year, on 23 June 1855, Penny once more left Aberdeen with the *Lady Franklin* and *Sophia*. Failing again to reach Lichtenfels to pick up the ever-patient Warmow, he reluctantly concluded that the future held little prospect of better results and that the Moravians should, instead, send out a missionary directly from Europe. On his return to Aberdeen the following year, Penny wrote to the Moravian Church on 25 September:

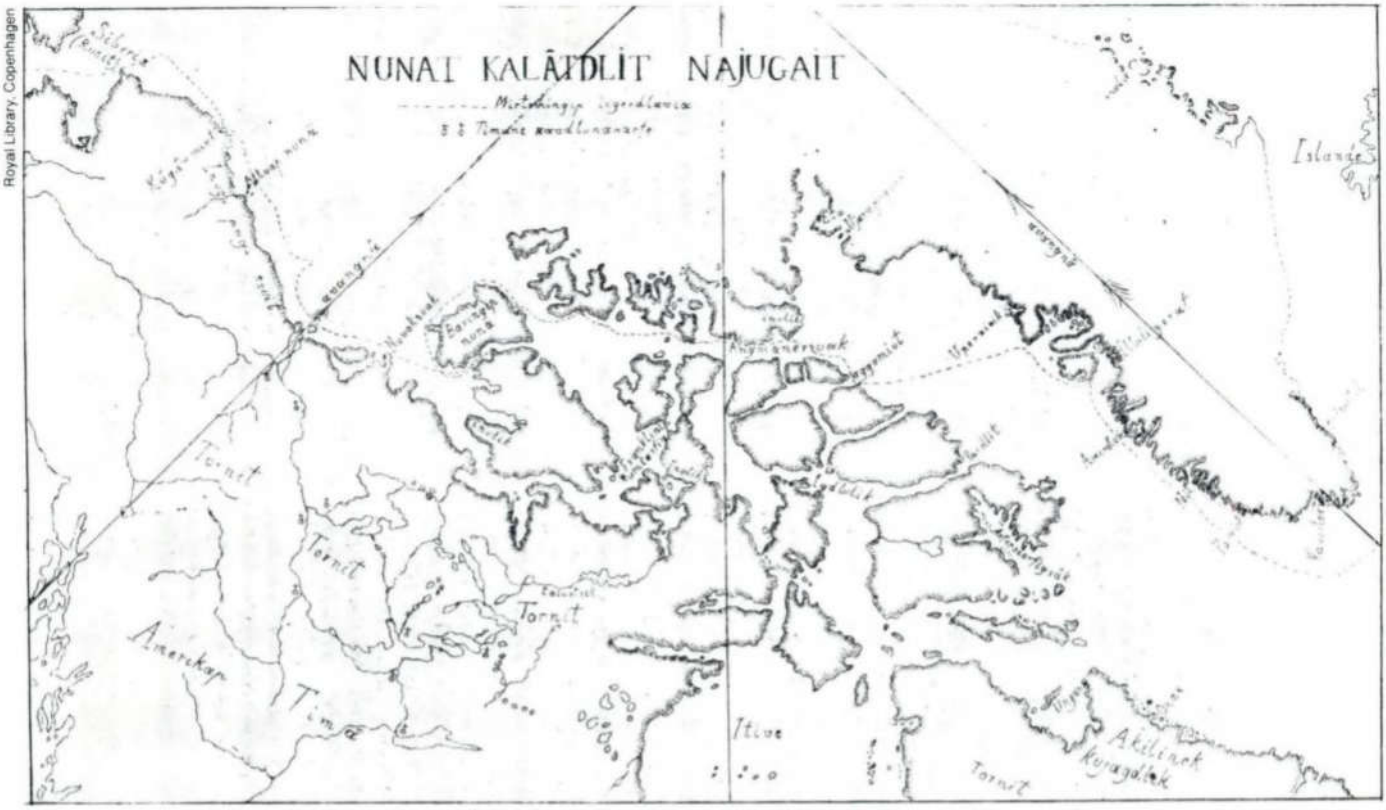
> The Natives are a most intelligent race, and showed themselves very anxious to receive the teacher I told them of. Many have died since the date of my last visit. If God spares my life, and enables me to take another voyage to their coasts, would it not be possible for you, with timely notice, to procure me a Missionary of your Church to accompany me from Aberdeen.

The Moravians acted quickly on his suggestion and it was decided that Brother Warmow should go out to Cumberland Sound the following year. In February he travelled to Fulneck in Yorkshire, to spend some time there to improve his command of English. In June he went on to Aberdeen to await the voyage to Baffin Island.

Mathias Warmow left Aberdeen with William Penny on the *Lady Franklin* on 30 June 1856. By 23 July, they were near the coast of Greenland which was obscured by fog. When they sighted the shores of Baffin on the last day of July, Warmow wrote:

> My feelings at the first sight of the region where I am to reside . . . for a year, I cannot describe. The thought occurred to me that I might perhaps find a grave here.

From 2 August until 30 August, the *Lady Franklin* coasted the south shore of Cumberland Sound, calling at a number of Eskimo camps: Naujartalik, Kingmiksok (Kimersok) and Nuvujat. Warmow was pleased to discover that the natives of the sound could understand his Greenlandic dialect with little difficulty. He was less impressed with the material



Royal Library, Copenhagen

Published in 'Atauagagdliutit', 1861, this map of 'The Lands where Eskimos Live' was probably prepared by the editor, Samuel Kleinschmidt, a veteran Moravian missionary.

and physical condition of the people he met. From Naujartalik, he noted:

> At 4 o'clock, the captain, the doctor, and myself went on shore. Here we met with three Esquimaux women and a child. They were dwelling in a miserable tent, and their condition was so wretched, that it must have excited pity even in the most unfeeling heart. They were delighted to see us. We took them on board with us, and they received some refreshment. In the evening, a man with his wife and child were brought on board. They were also in a most miserable condition. The man was quite blind, and the woman so weak and ill, that she could not walk without assistance, while the poor infant, about nine months old, cried incessantly, not being able to obtain nourishment from the emaciated mother. I was engaged in conversation with them till midnight. The man often squeezed my hand, and there was no end to their kujanermik [thanks]. As they understood me, and I them, very well, we were able to converse with but little difficulty. I soon told them of the intention of my coming, and was not a little surprised to find how well they understood it.

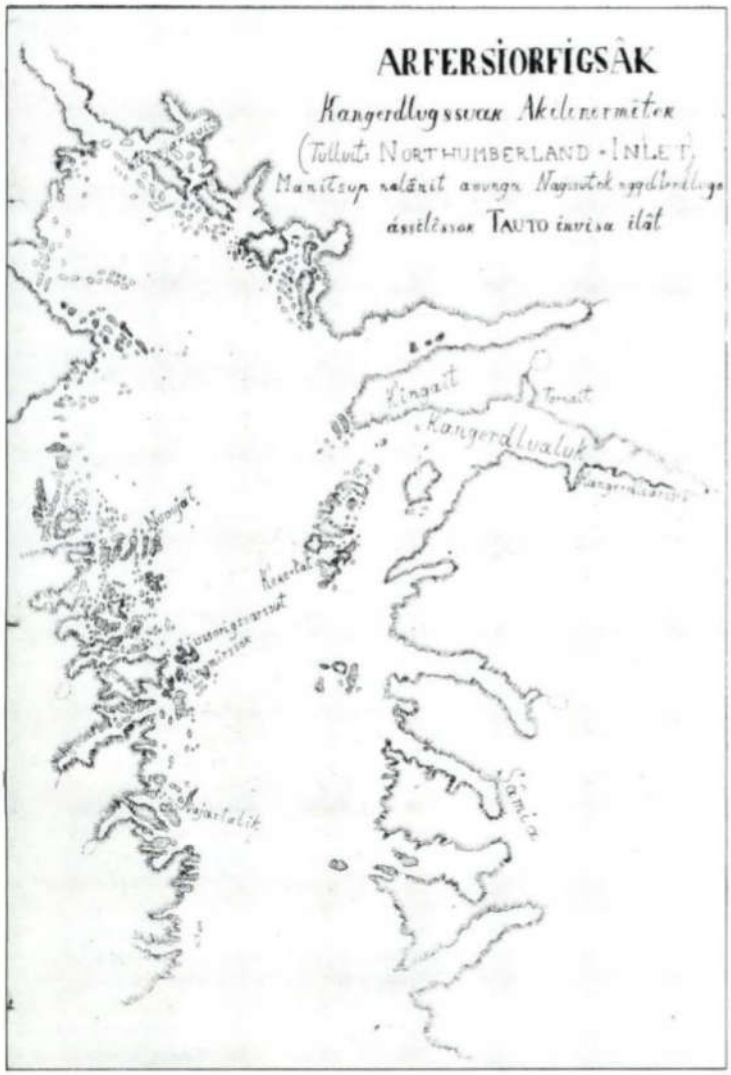
Penny's plan called for the erection of a house on the south shore of Cumberland Sound and, on 5 August, he landed at Nuvujat to discharge materials and erect the building. Warmow used the time to visit the occupants of two tents. He found two women who were 'perfectly astounded' when he addressed them in their own language.

By 9 August, the house was nearly complete. All the crew came ashore, and the first church service in Cumberland Sound was held.

Four days later, the *Lady Franklin* prepared to leave Nuvujat for the other side of the sound. Warmow recounted his departure:

> I went to take leave of the Esquimaux. . . . They expressed great regret at parting. At their request, I repeated to them the name *Jesuse Kristuse*, in order that they might not forget it. . . . Leaving two men to take charge of the house, we set sail in the afternoon.

The *Lady Franklin* failed to find her consort immediately, so sailed further towards the head of the sound, eventually finding the *Sophia* with four other ships in Tornait Harbour. Proceeding further, they met the *Alibi*, a ship owned by the *Lady Franklin*'s owners, and a small steamer. On the steamer Warmow met Captain Parker; in 1851 it was he who had initially proposed taking a Moravian missionary on the *Truelove* to Cumberland. Warmow accompanied an Eskimo nearly to the end of the fiord where the ship had anchored, and described it as 'a poor land, inhabited by poor people'. On 21 August, when Warmow boarded the *Alibi*, he found several



Royal Library, Copenhagen

Tauto, an Inuit of Cumberland Sound, drew this map of 'the newly found whaling grounds' for Mathias Warmow, 1861.

Eskimos living on board. They understood a little English and had been told that a 'minister' was coming to instruct them. Accordingly, they called Warmow by that English term, although he would have preferred to be called by his Christian name or its Greenlandic equivalent, Matiuse.

The *Lady Franklin* remained near Tornait until 17 October. From 25 September until 1 October, Warmow accompanied a party of whalers and Eskimos on an exploratory voyage north-west in search of whales. They met no other Eskimos and sighted no whales. On their return to the ship, however, they discovered that a large whale had been taken; several families of Eskimos had also arrived and there were nine tents erected on the beach.

They left Tornait on 17 October for another harbour near their intended winter quarters of Kekerten. By the end of October, they had anchored for the winter off Kekerten.

Warmow devoted considerable attention in his journal to the sorry condition of the Eskimos who had become too dependent on the vagaries of the whaling trade.

> I am always sorry to see the Esquimaux wearing European clothes, and, in short, imitating the Europeans in all respects. They were undoubtedly better off in their original state, and more likely to be gained for the Kingdom of God. But when they begin to copy our mode of life, they are neither properly Europeans nor Esquimaux, and will speedily die out, in consequence of the change.

One Eskimo man in particular made an unfavourable impression on the missionary. The man, who claimed to have once lived as far north as Pond Inlet, had been picked up with six others in a state of starvation from a leaking boat en route from the Cape Mercy area. Despite his distress, he was extremely cocky. Warmow wrote: 'When I asked his name, he replied, laying his hand on his breast, "Me Captain Pakak"!' Captain Parker would not have been impressed, and neither was Warmow: 'I thought this was indeed a wonderful captain, with nothing to command, and indeed possessed of nothing but his miserable life.'

The dependence of Eskimos on the whaling industry took them away from their seasonal hunting pursuits. Their failure to hunt their traditional game deprived families of skins for tents and clothing, and of caches of food for winter. On 18 October, when the *Lady Franklin* was anchored nine miles from Kekerten, Warmow noted that 78 Eskimos were camped near them. At Kekerten, on 5 November, he recorded that there was much sickness among the natives.

> This was indeed no wonder. Many were still living in tents, only one skin thick, and usually by no means free from holes. Others had snow-houses, which were undoubtedly better, but still cold enough. They therefore remained on board the ship as much as possible, where, owing to the number crowded together, the heat not unfrequently became very great. This caused perspiration, and when they returned in the evening to their freezing abodes, severe colds were inevitable.

By early May the number of Eskimos camped at Kekerten had increased to 150, almost half the population which Warmow estimated for the entire sound. All were retained in the service of the whaling ships and devoted their whole attention to it. There was, Warmow despaired, little scope for missionary activity. Of greater consequence, there had been little attention paid to hunting.

> The Esquimaux were very unfavourably situated at this season, as the sun shone with so much power, as to thaw their snow-houses. Very few had tents, or the skins for constructing them, as they had entirely neglected the pursuit of seals.

The Eskimos, in this period of early contact with non-natives, seem to have been so impressed with the technology and accomplishments of Europeans that they were willing to attribute almost any feat to the white man. Warmow spoke to them about the creation story:

> In conversation with the natives, I referred to the creation of the world. They said that some one must undoubtedly have made all things, but who it was, they did not know. They thought, however, that it must have been a very powerful and clever man, and most likely a European.

Not all Eskimos were anxious to subject themselves to a dependence on the whalers. Warmow was particularly impressed with one man who had been brought in by sled to the whalers' winter quarters after his wife had walked in from a considerable distance to report that her husband's feet were badly frost-bitten. The man, between sixty and seventy years of age, was the oldest the missionary had met in the sound. He shunned Europeans, though the whalers had promised him much should he only come to work for them. He had, as a result, remained 'a real Esquimaux' and continued to hunt caribou by bow and arrow, while most others had adopted the use of firearms. Warmow thought that he must have been a skilful and industrious man because of the good quality and number of his implements. Unfortunately the man died while camped at Kekerten.

On 25 June, the ice between ship and shore was broken up and carried away by a strong wind. On 19 July the *Lady Franklin* left the harbour at Kekerten, where she had lain for nine months. Eskimos came on board in the morning to bid a farewell to the missionary and to inquire if he would return the following year. Regretfully, Warmow told them that he could not promise to return. It was the last they were to see of him. The ship crossed the Sound of Nuvujat where Warmow, in taking his leave of another group of Eskimos, 'squeezed their hands till the joints cracked'.

On 22 August 1857, the *Lady Franklin* and *Sophia* anchored off Aberdeen. A few days later, Mathias Warmow was in London, where he made a preliminary report to the Secretaries to the Missions and the Committee of the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel. Proceeding to Herrnhut, Germany, he made his official report to the mission board. That body came reluctantly to the conclusion that it would not be expedient to establish a mission in Cumberland Sound, at least at that time.

An Inuit woman at Hopedale on the Labrador, where the Moravians had ministered to the people since 1782. Dated 1864.

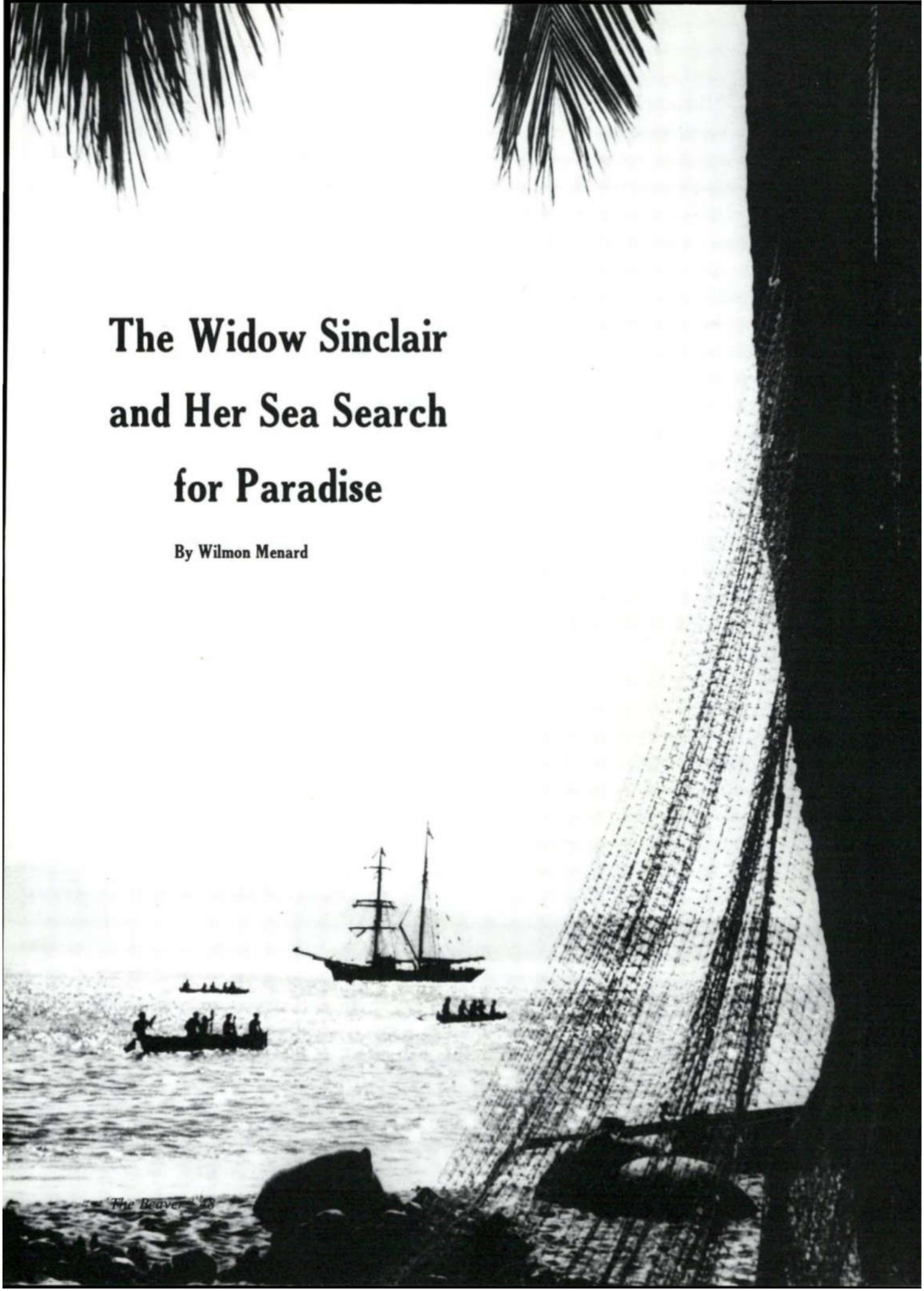
The board gave three reasons for its decision against opening the Moravian mission in Cumberland Sound. The first was the small native population; Warmow estimated it to be approximately 350, and decreasing. Second, the activities of British and American whalers had created a dependence on the whaling industry; it had taken the Eskimos away from their traditional camps and from their hunting, and made them dependent on European foods and clothing totally unsuited to their circumstances. This fact had contributed largely to the decrease in population. The final reason was the anticipated difficulty of supplying a Cumberland Sound mission and maintaining regular communication, especially should British whalers cease to frequent the sound.

Warmow had been touched by the desire of the Eskimos to have a missionary in their midst, and expressed in his journal a desire 'to live, and labour, and die among them' should a mission prove feasible in the future. It was never to be. On 7 November 1858, Warmow was ordained a deacon of the Moravian Church at Herrnhut. The following January he married and in May he and his bride embarked at Copenhagen for his new mission at Lichtenau in southern Greenland. From there, he wrote in the following year:

> I am often, in spirit, at Cumberland Inlet, and most heartily desire that a day of grace may soon come for the Esquimaux at that place. ◆

The Widow Sinclair and Her Sea Search for Paradise

By Wilmon Menard



IN 1863 ELIZA SINCLAIR, a sixty-three-year-old Scottish widow, summoned her family to the parlour of her manor house in Holmes Bay, on New Zealand's South Island, to make a startling announcement. Their home and lands had been sold and the family would now sail across the Pacific to find a better location. Canada, she thought, would be their destination. She had heard it was 'a bonnie country' with unspoiled forests and beautiful rivers and that the people there were of their kind: hard-working and friendly, and many of them of Scottish origin.

Eliza was fulfilling a long-cherished plan she had shared with her husband, Captain Francis Sinclair, British naval hero of the battles of Copenhagen, Trafalgar and the Nile. When the Sinclair family had arrived in New Zealand in 1840, it was said that Eliza was one of the most beautiful women to step ashore in 'Maori land'. She was then forty years old, but years younger in appearance, and the mother of six children brought from their farm in Sterling, Scotland. They eventually found suitable land in Holmes Bay, seventeen miles south-east of Christchurch, and after five years on this land — offered to retired British officers and their families by England — they had cleared a vast acreage.

In 1846 tragedy struck. Captain Sinclair with his eldest son George and a friend of the son, were lost at sea on a voyage between Christchurch and Wellington. This great calamity would have permanently crushed a woman of lesser spirit, but Eliza, after months of deep grief, recovered and took active charge of running the vast farmlands of Craigforth. For seventeen years she endured; Craigforth prospered and her daughters and sons came to adulthood, married and brought back grandchildren to the home at Holmes Bay. Eliza, however, never abandoned the hope of an estate in Canada.

In 1863 she prepared to sail off with her family to find this new land in North America. She instructed her son-in-law, Captain Thomas Gay, long in service to the British Merchant Marine and married to her daughter Jean, to find and purchase a suitable sailing-ship for the voyage. He found the perfect vessel, a 300-ton barque, the *Bessie*. She was refitted with proper comforts installed for the large family who would be aboard, and supplies began arriving at the dock. These were quickly carried aboard by Maori stevedores for stowing on deck or in the hold. Furniture, books, paintings, clothing and preserved foods: jams and jellies prepared in the kitchen of Craigforth, hogsheads of bully-beef, and apples in barrels from the orchards. Even a cow was led aboard, mooing plaintively, to insure fresh milk for Eliza's grandchildren. On deck there were pens of chickens, carefully selected Merino sheep, and pigs, with sufficient amounts of hay and fodder for such livestock. At the last minute, Eliza decided that their piano must be taken with them to insure suitable accompaniment for religious services and musicales at sea. The sailing date was set for early April of 1863.

Her daughter Helen wrote in her diary: 'Mother was on the jetty in Holmes Bay from early morning until well after dark, now dashing nimbly up the gangway, checking cargo aboard, keeping the workers stepping lively, and conferring with this one and that one of the officials with Captain Gay for clearance of New Zealand.'

Eliza Sinclair in the year of the New Zealand departure was well beyond middle age, at a time in life when a mother's destiny was supposed to be firmly established: attending to a garden of flowers, knitting, reading, supervising the running of a large household. Anne, her youngest daughter wrote later:

> Mother's heart did not quail. Even as twenty-four years before she had set out from Scotland on unknown seas, and founded a new home, so did she start again, when sixty-three years of age,

This could have been the scene when Eliza Sinclair's sailing ship 'Bessie' arrived at Niihau Island in early 1864.

Dr Menard of California and Honolulu is a graduate of the universities of Paris, France, and Padua, Italy, in Polynesian and Asiatic anthropology and sociology. He was correspondent in the south-west Pacific during World War II and has since written a number of books including 'The Two Worlds of Somerset Maugham'.

This article is based on letters in the Hay Collection in the Canterbury Museum, South Island, New Zealand, and on interviews with descendants of Eliza Sinclair.

Photographs are by the author except where otherwise noted.

Hay Collection, New Zealand

Craigforth, the Sinclair home on New Zealand's South Island. Sketch by an anonymous artist, 2 June 1853.

Hay Collection, New Zealand

Eliza McHutchison Sinclair and her husband, Captain Francis Sinclair of the British Royal Navy, taken in 1843 in New Zealand. Eliza was forty-three years old at this time.

doubting not that we would find what we were seeking in Canada, the El Dorado of all our dreams.

Aboard the *Bessie* were twelve members of her immediate family, in-laws and grandchildren, one barely two years old. Eliza, though just a little over five feet and delicately formed, was on deck at all hours, keeping a sharp watch over the six small children, making suggestions to Captain Gay, and supervising the program for the days at sea as rigorously as she had the daily rituals at Craigforth in Holmes Bay.

Their first stop was Tahiti, with anchorage in Matavai Bay which, the British Consul informed them later, was almost the same spot where Captain Samuel Wallis had anchored his vessel, the *Dolphin*, on his voyage of discovery 18 June 1767. Approaching from the sea to find a reef-passage into Tahiti's lagoon, Eliza's first impression was that the island just might offer prospects for their new home. She wrote in her diary: 'It was such a lovely day, and in the sunlight the islands of Tahiti and Eimeo (Moorea) were very green and inviting after so many days at sea, with clouds festooned about their high pinnacles; waterfalls poured down the slopes, and there was the fragrance of tropical flowers in the wind. I thought: perhaps this island could be our paradise, instead of Canada.'

But once ashore, she found Papeete and its environs ugly. There were only drinking places for carousing seamen off sailing-ships and whalers. The only available land was coastal, with shallow extensions into narrow valleys. Most of the suitable land was planted in sugar-cane, and not for sale. Nor did she think the livestock would do well in an island so close to the equator.

The *Bessie* set sail for Vancouver Island and arrived early in June of 1863. Eliza was delighted with the view they had as they approached Victoria. 'In some ways' she wrote, 'the scenery reminds me of Scotland in her more heavily wooded parts, the air is so crisp and clear, and how the sun shines down upon this blessed land. I am so hopeful of finding what we want here.'

The Canadian Indians were of intense interest to all on board, but the visits by the aborigines of Vancouver Island in canoes overawed them. Daughter Helen wrote: 'With slivers of white bone through their lower lips, which turn them out and hold them down for some reason, they are not, indeed, like the Maoris of New Zealand, but remind me of stories I've read of the cannibals of New Guinea.'

They all made trips by horse and carriage far out into the countryside and virgin valleys of Vancouver Island. They were fascinated by the runs of salmon at the entrances of the rivers. Eliza wrote: 'One could almost reach into the shallow water and catch them by hand. Oh, if we can only find the land we need here, we would all be so happy.'

But after many days of searching for suitable acreage, the facts became disappointingly clear to all of them. The lands proper for sheep and cattle ranches were too heavily wooded. It would take a fortune and years of hard labour to clear them. Eliza wrote: 'How sad I am that we cannot stay here in Canada! It has pleased us so many ways. The bay, the town, the English and Scotch people here are so attractive and interesting. Mr. Henry Rhodes,* associated with the Hudson's Bay Company, has now made what he seems to think is a very practical suggestion for us: go to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii), because there might be large lands at a very reasonable price. So I held a family meeting this evening, and it is agreed we will sail south to Honolulu.'

The *Bessie* arrived in the port of Honolulu, 17 September 1863. The Reverend Samuel Chenery

** Mr Henry Rhodes was a landowner and business man in Victoria in 1863. He was born in the Hawaiian Islands, of English parentage, and arrived in Victoria at the age of 21. He may have been a member of the firm 'Janion, Green & Rhodes' merchants who imported 'Blankets, Dry goods, clothing . . . .'. His association with the H B C was possibly as an agent.*

Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C.

A view of Victoria, July 1858. The 'Bessie' and the Sinclair family arrived five years later in search of farm lands.

Damon, a seaman chaplain, the first to greet them aboard, described the visit: 'On going down to the wharf I was surprised to find the trim barque with its large family party on board, with a beautiful old lady at its head, books, pictures . . . even a piano, and all that could add refinement to a floating home, with cattle and sheep of valuable breeds in pens on deck.'

Eliza could not have arrived at a more propitious time in Hawaii. King Kamehameha IV's treasury was rather depleted. He needed cash, and when he learned that Eliza Sinclair was looking for suitable lands for a farm, he offered them an entire island, Niihau, with its population of about 300 native Hawaiians, 17 miles south-west of Kauai Island — for $10,000! The thrifty Scottish woman paid this amount in British sovereigns without any quibbling. Seventy-two square miles of land, averaging 22 cents an acre!

The Arcadian life, so long planned by Eliza Sinclair and her husband, had its inception, albeit under a matriarchy. Labour was plentiful on nearby Kauai, and an elegant home was constructed at Nonopapa beyond the present-day village of Puuwai, at Kiekie, just above the thundering surf. It was finally to become a twenty-room, ranch-type mansion, bordered by wide verandas, passageways, servants' quarters, barns for splendid Arabian horses and sheds for elegant carriages. A strain of cattle was imported from Big Hawaii Island, and more sheep were brought in to breed with the Merino stock from New Zealand. Today, the walls and timbers of 'The House' as they simply named it, are the same prefabricated sections that were made in Boston and shipped around Cape Horn in 1864.

When the house was finished, Captain Gay sailed the *Bessie* back to Honolulu, then continued south to Australia to sell the vessel. The barque was sold, but Captain Gay contracted pneumonia and died without seeing his youngest child, Alice, born on 17 March 1865, the first of the Sinclair clan to be born on Niihau.

Here on Niihau, as at Craigforth, Eliza Sinclair ruled as a kindly, wise and beloved leader. A visitor to Niihau in 1875 described her: 'A lady of the old Scotch type, beautiful in her old age, very talented, bright, humorous, with a definite character . . . though upwards of seventy she rides on horseback . . . as light in figure and step as a young girl.' She passed away quietly in her sleep in 1893, well on her way to reaching the century mark in a contented old age. She had fulfilled the dream conceived by long talks with

The Sinclair home on Niihau Island at Nonopapa. 'The House' a twenty-room, ranch-style dwelling, (left, background) still stands today. It was built of prefabricated sections made in Boston, Massachusetts, and shipped around Cape Horn in 1864.

her husband; her family, and the families after them, had been guaranteed their wonderful and large private domain.

Today — 118 years after the sailing from New Zealand in the *Bessie* — this privately owned isle is still in the possession of her descendants and is still a matriarchy. The small island, one hundred and twenty miles of sub-tropical paradise, is only about 100 miles distant from the commercialism and crowds of Waikiki. It still serves as an eternal refuge for about 230 descendants of the native Hawaiians who were there when Eliza Sinclair took possession, the last rare remnant of a pure or near-pure Polynesian race.

As it was with Eliza, her descendants, the Robinsons of Kauai Island, are still adamant about keeping curious visitors off their shores. A large sign there proclaims *KAPU: KEEP OFF!*

There have been several attempts in the past two decades, the last one in 1975 — and there will no doubt be more in the future — by the Hawaiian Islands Government to institute condemnation proceedings and purchase Niihau for conversion into a sort of state park, on the premise that the Robinson family are maintaining 'a feudal island-state of serfs'. But the Robinsons, of the same strength of purpose and philosophy as Eliza Sinclair, have always met the challenge with the same response: 'Niihau is not for sale!'

They elaborate: 'Our early family, and all members of the present family, are authorities on Hawaiian culture. We want to preserve and perpetuate an ideal way of life that has all but disappeared in other islands of the Hawaiian group, because of western influence, tourism and attendant economic pressures.'

Their meaning is explicit; they wish to prevent the healthy and happy Niihauans from being exposed to publicity and tourism. Their concern is valid. Pure-blood Hawaiians numbered about 300,000 at the time of Captain James Cook's visit in 1779; they had dwindled to 130,000 in 1832; and 49,000 only could be counted in 1872. The latest United States Bureau of Census Report lists only 9,000 *near-pure* Hawaiians, which disturbingly indicates the eventual and total eclipse of the handsome Hawaiian race, except perhaps for the small segment that is now protected by the Robinson family on Niihau Island.

From some distance at sea, Niihau resembles a huge whale basking on the shimmering surface of the blue Pacific ocean. Ashore, the scenery is idyllic. A short distance beyond the rocky beaches one enters upon wide pleasant meadows of indigenous grasses, mesquite and coconut palms. There are grazing ranges for over a thousand Roan, Durham, and Shorthorn cattle; 12,000 sheep of the Merino strain forage over the sunlit, grassy plains, offspring of the original stock brought from New Zealand in 1863. There are sudden flights of protected plovers, the

gobble of over 3,000 plump turkeys, the humming of bees producing honey, almost tame pheasants, and strutting peacocks from whose plumage the Niihauans fashion the expensive hat-bands and *leis* for Waikiki's smart tourist shops. The women string shell necklaces, and gather *opihi* (the highly esteemed limpet sea-life, which brings $6-$10 a pound) and expertly weave the fine *makaloa* mats for which Niihau is famous.

Today, as in Eliza's time, a matriarch controls the life and activities of Niihau: Helen Matthew Robinson, 65-year-old wife of the late Lester Robinson, is a direct descendant of the Sinclairs; her sons Keith and Bruce supervise the operations she has programmed for their private domain.

Just about everyone on Niihau puts in a full day of gainful occupation. The average daily income of a Niihauan is about $4. There are however no bill collectors. It seems that Eliza Sinclair in her inviolable last will and testament decreed that no Hawaiian on Niihau would ever be without food, shelter, and spending money. In Honolulu, 100 miles distant, the secure life-style of the Niihauans could be matched by a worker earning $2,000 a month.

In the tiny village of Puuwai, with its pleasant

Nets are still cast in the traditional Hawaiian style on Niihau Island today.

These sheep on Niihau Island are descendants of the original Merino sheep brought from New Zealand on the 'Bessie'.

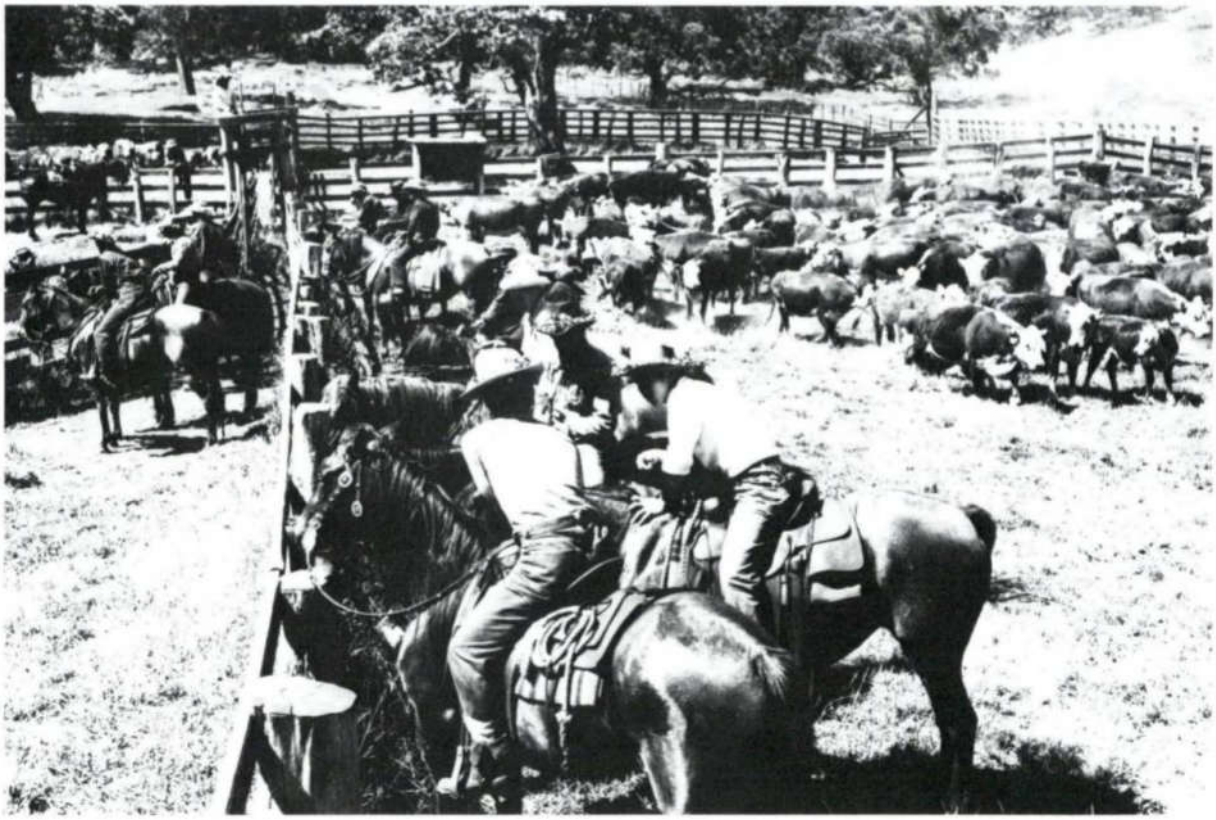
Benjamin Kanahele receives the Medal of Merit from Lieutenant-Governor Robert C. Richardson Jr., for saving Niihau villagers from death in December 1941.

communal atmosphere, the separated rock-fence-enclosed wooden dwellings are neat and freshly painted, with porches and eaves canopied by bougain-villaea vines, and yards planted with flowers and vegetables. There is a medley of lyrical conversation, so euphonious with the Hawaiian language (a dying tongue in all other islands of the group), spontaneous laughter, singing and the strumming of guitars and ukuleles.

There are no electric lights or telephones; transmission between the Robinson's Makaweli head-quarters on Kauai Island is maintained by a recently installed radiophone, dispensing with the former carrier-pigeon or emergency bonfire communication-signal system; there is no court-house or jail and no hospital, except for a small infirmary behind the school building for emergency cases. The young people of the island attend a one-room modern school with a curriculum through the eighth grade, and if they wish can then attend high school in Kauai and continue advanced studies of a practical nature in a university in Honolulu.

There is no movie theatre, discotheque, orphan asylum or mental institution in the Niihauans' village of Puuwai; neither are there passenger cars, tax collectors, labour unions or politicians. Ecology is scrupulously observed, and no one pollutes the atmosphere, the land, or the sea. The paramount

Hawaiian cowboys ('paniolos' as they are called on the islands) gather for a talk as they round up cattle on Niihau Island.



concern of the native Hawaiians on this island is to live uncomplicated and unpretentious lives.

The Niihauans today still cherish one of their heroes of World War II. There is no commemorative statue erected in Puuwai Village to his memory, but in traditional homage they speak reverently of him. His name is Benihakaka (Benjamin) Kanahele, and although he passed away in 1963, he is not forgotten. It seems that he, with assistance from his wife when the enemy wounded him, saved the entire population of Niihau from being slaughtered.

In December of 1941, a Japanese fighter-pilot, participating in the carrier-based aerial attack on Pearl Harbour, crashed on Niihau against a rock wall which the Army Command on Kauai had ordered the islanders to erect in their open meadows, to prevent landings by enemy planes. The desperate flier dismantled his machine-gun, mounted it on a small carriage which he made two Japanese employees of the Robinson family pull, and set out to exterminate every Hawaiian he encountered. The Niihauans, forewarned, escaped into secret caves along the seashore, but it would have been only a matter of time until the pilot flushed them out.

Ben, in hiding, talked earnestly with his wife, and they reached a decision. They would serve as decoys to divert the flier from his senseless act. They walked out of their cave with arms upraised, and surrendered. The Japanese pilot ordered Ben to show him where the villagers were hiding. Ben, to gain time, led the flier on a round-about course, until he had a chance to seize him and swing him head-first against a lava wall, in a manner identical to ancient Hawaiian warfare.

Ben was brought to Honolulu after the war, in August of 1945, and Lieutenant-General Robert C. Richardson Jr, commanding the Army Forces in the mid-Pacific, presented him with the most cherished and highest civilian award from the United States government, the Medal of Merit. He was dined and fêted, offered a high-paying government job in Honolulu, a home free and clear, a car — just about anything he wanted. But Ben elected to go home to Niihau to a simpler life. His huge body in the constrictive dark suit, bought for him for the ceremony, had been sweated through, his feet in the tight leather shoes were causing him excruciating agony, his ears were aching with the *Waha-nui* (loud talk). He never left Niihau again.

There is a strict rule on Niihau about the Hawaiians leaving Niihau, because of boredom or curiosity, and having a fling in tourist centres such as Waikiki. It seems to be a valid interdiction.

A Robinson spokesman explained it logically: 'There are the dissenters, the agitators, the nonconformists, in every community, no matter where it is. A young man or woman might leave Niihau,

When these children complete the eighth grade in the one-roomed school on Niihau Island, they may decide to attend high school on Kauai Island and then continue their studies at a Honolulu university.

drink, carouse, dissipate in Honolulu . . . maybe meet someone who'd make him ashamed of his Niihau nativity.'

There is a model case of a young man lured away from Niihau by stories of the glamour of Waikiki. One morning he took flight from Puuwai as a stowaway aboard the Robinson's cattle-barge. He made his way finally to Waikiki, got a job washing dishes in a restaurant, and experienced the strange foods, drinks, drugs and attractions. Within two months he was back on Kauai, twenty pounds thinner, shaking as if with palsy, and begging the Robinson family to permit him to return to Niihau. In conference, they voted to grant him his request. They felt he would serve as a testimonial to the questionable benefits of populous Hawaii.

The concern and humanitarian motives of Eliza Sinclair, the first matriarch of Niihau, are still providing some 230 Hawaiians with a life-style that few people will ever experience anywhere in the world today. ◆

LELAND Bell of Manitoulin Island is a young man with a young man's wisdom. In his search for knowledge he reaches out to others through his art.

His work is distinguished by the wisps of substance that come from the mouths and hands of his painted figures. These are 'lines of communication'.

'That is my way of talking to those who see my work,' he says. 'I am talking about all the good things of the world: the sacred foods that are gifts from the earth to sustain us — the strawberries, corn, rice and wild meat. These are all good things. I paint them in a way that is gentle and serene, by lines that are rounded off and deep.'

In the 'Sacred Fire', the fire-keeper maintains his vigil in the lodge of life. 'The fire must burn all the time in the minds and hearts of the people. If it is not tended, those things that give meaning to our lives — our traditions and beliefs — will die. We will lose them.'

'I am only young,' he explains. 'I must learn. With these paintings I tell others that I am alive, that there are many good things on earth, that I have hope.'

Leland Bell was born in 1953 in Wikwemikong, Manitoulin Island, Ontario. He was raised there and in Toronto, and graduated from Laurentian University in Sudbury where he majored in native studies. An Ojibwa-Odawa Indian, Mr Bell prefers to identify himself as an Anishinabe an Ojibwa word for native American, meaning literally 'from whence man was lowered'.

He began painting professionally in 1976. Prior to that time he devoted much energy to creative writing and music — fields in which he has considerable talent.

His acrylics and water-colours have been exhibited at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, at Laurentian University and at a number of galleries in Ontario and Western Canada. He is a thoughtful and articulate artist, and in 1979 was a featured speaker at the Native American Art History Symposium in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

'Sacred Fire' by Leland Bell. 1980.

A POUR OF RAIN
Stories from a West Coast Fort

By Helen Meilleur. Sono Nis Press, Victoria, B.C., 1980. 290 pp., illus. $8.95.

Reviewed by Malvina Bolus

When I was very young my enlightened parents set me on the right track with a small book called *Reading Without Tears*. This book might be a mature companion as *History Without Tears*. The events recounted span one hundred years in the life of Fort Simpson (later Port Simpson to distinguish it from the fort on the Mackenzie). The historical events are taken from a variety of sources, published and original, mainly H B C and British Columbia Archives; later events are from the lives of the author, born in Port Simpson, and her parents. Her father ran a store in the Tsimshian settlement, selling 'the most modern materials he could procure' for 'the Indians were leaping headlong into our cultures' and the H B C had failed 'to adjust from the molasses-rice-and-blanket trade'. Mrs Meilleur's own experiences tell of the village in the first decades of this century, of school days, of local customs and food, of how she and a friend found the grave of Aemilius Simpson — in the berry patch that was formerly the H B C garden — where he was reburied after Fort Simpson and the captain's remains were moved from the Nass to their later location.

Mrs Meilleur has succeeded in making a clever blend of records and personal memories which is delightful reading and her sense of humour is a trait all too rare in historians. Here is no chronological study, no solemn academic style nor the bleakness of the journal entries but a light modern touch that enlivens, as in 'hit-and-run canoe raids', and 'Raymond the blacksmith who was accident prone'; all is based on thorough research.

In its heyday Fort Simpson was the most important port on the coast between the Columbia and Sitka. Governor George Simpson estimated in the 1840s that some 14,000 Indians traded at the fort. It dwindled to a minor Indian fishing village, then struggled towards recovery. Some surprising facts about early trade emerge, such as the importance of potatoes from the Queen Charlotte Islands, an unsatisfactory fort crop; the cod fishery, not salmon, that brought competing vessels, and the trade in ice for San Francisco, a lucrative business in the early 1850s.

The Company traded not only for furs, oil, tallow, cedar mats, but at times for people, exchanging goods for slaves who would be returned to their own bands. (The Indians regarded the hard-working labourers at the fort as slaves, and treated them as such when they could.) The outstanding trade in people was when the trader bought the captain and mate of the *Susan Sturgis* (captured by the Massets) and subsequently the rest of the crew, some of whom were returned naked, for a quantity of blankets, shirts, powder, tobacco, and cotton.

The factors in the isolated post, served only by coastal vessels, faced many problems. Among them was the explosive situation created by the mixture of humans. In the fort personnel were Orkneymen, Sandwich Islanders, Scots, English, French-Canadians, mixed-bloods, visiting Americans, as well as the disputatious Indians: Tsimshian, Tlingit, and Haida, who frequented the post and if not fighting each other could find reasons to fight among themselves. There were also epidemics, liquor, and accidents to cope with, for men fell off buildings, chopped their feet, were injured by bursting guns.

The archival illustrations are not altogether satisfactory but give some idea of place and people; rather better ones of old Fort Simpson are in *The Beaver*, September 1940. Sadly lacking is a good map in place of the ineffective one reproduced. But there is an extensive bibliography and a good index. Serious readers may consider Mrs Meilleur's style a trifle facetious but there is careful research behind the liveliness of *A Pour of Rain* which I found most enjoyable.

Malvina Bolus is the former editor of 'The Beaver'.

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PITSEOLAK
A Canadian Tragedy

By David F. Raine. Hurtig Publishers Ltd., Edmonton, 1980. 176 pp. $12.95.

Reviewed by Brian W. Lewis

I have not found writing a commentary on David Raine's book an easy task despite the fact that 'young Pitseolak' touched both Raine's life and my own. Like Raine I was a teacher at Cape Dorset. Like him I was an immigrant twice over: once from London to Canada, once more to the land of the Inuit; for in the 1960s travelling to Baffin Island was like visiting a foreign country where very little English was spoken and the people depended heavily on hunting for subsistence.

I first met Pitseolak in 1964. He was 18 years old and had already

spent considerable time in southern Canada. Like all of Oshoochiak's children he was handsome beyond belief. When I first met him he was already a tormented soul. The Churchill Vocational Centre was due to open in September 1964; Grade four was the basic entrance and, although Pitseolak was rather a mature pre-vocational student, he was accepted and Oshoochiak agreed that he could go. To me it seemed an opportunity for him to continue with his schooling under conditions he could cope with. To Pitseolak, to the administrator, to the young girls he pursued and caught, to the young men he battered with his fists until they were unconscious, to his family who loved him but who could not contain him, and to the old people who feared his anger and could not understand him, it was a chance for him to get out — not to Ottawa, or Montreal — but at least to the modern world, the South, which beguiled and enchanted him.

David Raine and Pitseolak met five years later. In the five years until that time Pitseolak saw life on the 'outside'; except that Churchill, like Dorset, proved to be too small for him and his days as a vocational student were short-lived.

David Raine tells an honest story and he tells it well, describing life in Baffin Island much as I remember it in 1969. He makes the standard observations about the issues which divide the cultures: the formality of school, the comparative luxury of government staff housing, the cultural bias of psychological tests, the bureaucracy of budgets, schedules and Eskimo disc lists; but this is not a book which assigns blame for, or offers solutions to the huge problems faced by the modern Inuit. Rather it is a story about a sensitive school teacher and a young Inuit trying to understand each other and, as the story unfolds, we are introduced to several of the leaders in the village: Peter Pitseolak; Parr; Pauta; Pitseolak's brother, Mangitak — each one in a few deft phrases given a style and a personality which, thankfully, transcends the stereotype.

Even the legendary Pootoogook, the old chief, dead since 1959 but resting in his grave on the hillside facing Raine's window, plays his part. From his window Raine can see the tormented young man constantly at his window and beyond it the grave of the *Innumarik*, Pootoogook, 'the real Eskimo'.

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Like so many teachers in the Eastern Arctic during the sixties and before, Raine was fascinated by the history, the traditions and culture of the Inuit. It is paradoxical but true that while Raine struggled with Inuktitut and the mythology, the young people at Dorset wanted to know about the Middle East, discotheques and world affairs. Pitseolak's lack of interest in his own culture, his constant allusions to the boring place and boring people frustrated Raine. Eventually, this school teacher, the quintessential Englishman with his ritual of tea and biscuits, his carefully ordered life, his obsession with deadlines as a part-time news reporter, his daily two-way local radio scheduled at 12:30 p.m. sharp, with his friend at the co-operative, realizes that he and Pitseolak 'were passing each other in mid-stream, going in opposite directions'.

Raine does not patronize Pitseolak. He treats him as a young friend, the kind of friend one can joke with one minute and be brutally frank with the next. Young Pitseolak was back in Dorset. He had seen the world. There was no welcoming committee. He was no further ahead than when I had known him in 1964. He was still shadow boxing, avoiding reality, his handsome face still unscarred.

Raine is at his best in describing the nuances of his growing relationship with Pitseolak: the joking, the counselling, the brightening glow of friendship. In doing so, he tells much about himself. He stays at Dorset long enough to see Pitseolak's ordeal, his groping towards the ideals of Pootoogook, and the unforgiving toll of the hard hunting life on his city-softened body. When he leaves Dorset, Raine is the tormented one. His own ideals shattered, he leaves because he 'didn't want to be there to watch the inescapable period of transition with all its traumas and problems.' One cannot help but feel that he has been the student all along, has keen-

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Edited and Introduced by
Alan F. J. Artibise, Ph.D.

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ly analyzed the problem, and has seen as much as he wanted to through that window overlooking the settlement. Teaching across cultures takes its toll too and it is sad that Raine with his sensitivity and sympathy, and others like him, leave just as they are beginning to understand.

The tragedy referred to in the title took place 12 years ago when Inuit were called Eskimos and were identified in the bureaucracy by E7 prefixed numbers on a disc list. It is a simple, powerful, polished and balanced story about a well-meaning teacher's attempt to ease the torment of a young Inuk torn between two worlds. Although the Englishman who wrote it is now in Bermuda, and the two English nurses are back in England, Mike the English missionary is still labouring with the 'traumas and the problems of transition' as he has been for the last twenty-five years, a period which has seen dozens of tragedies much like Pitseolak's. Nevertheless the story of Pitseolak is indeed a Canadian tragedy and Hurtig, who never flinches from putting Canada in the title, deserves to be congratulated on a book which should be read, not just by teachers, amateur anthropologists and northern travellers, but by anyone who wants to read a human story about two very different people groping towards each other, and towards an understanding of the clash of cultures.

Brian Lewis is deputy minister of education in the government of the Northwest Territories.

THE INUIT AMAUTIK
I Like My Hood to be Full

Edited by Bernadette Driscoll, Associate Curator Inuit Art. The Winnipeg Art Gallery, Winnipeg, 1980. 128 pp., illus. $17 cloth; $12.50 paper.

Reviewed by A. Dudley Copland

This is a difficult book to review, even for one who has lived and travelled with members of almost every Inuit group in the Canadian Arctic and who had more than a passing interest in the design and functional efficiency of the garments worn throughout the seasons. The amount of research that has made this remarkable book possible is almost overpowering.

In the first five sections the book deals with the *amautik* or carrying hood of the female garment. It deals with regional variations in style, the influence of European and American contacts, the traditional role of the woman, and the changing role which the dramatic events of the past fifty years have brought about. From self-sufficient family units the Inuit culture has passed through a rapid development into communities of up to several thousands of people. The young people know little of the past but readily recognize that it would be impossible to reverse this present trend.

George Swinton, a recognized authority on Inuit art, deals with the symbolic design of the caribou amautik and points out the rapidly changing fashions of the western world which are in direct contrast to the steady and consistent evolution of the perfect garments for all seasons which the Inuit people have created.

In the chapters that follow, the amautik in Inuit art and society is discussed. Many fine illustrations tend to show that Inuit artists have recognised in their work the importance of motherhood and the function of the homemaker, as an indispensable partner of the hunter and provider.

Pictures showing Shoofly 'Comer' (p. 6) and a group of women taken at Fullerton by the A. P. Low Expedition (p. 10) show how the garments retain the traditional design but with added massive beadwork, undoubtedly the result of contacts with American whalers. In these early photographs ankle bags, an unusual innovation for the homemakers' use, are also shown. On completion of the igloo-building the woman enters and spreads out the sleeping skins, then slips off her kumiks and places her feet in the ankle bags for comfort.

The people living on the west coast of Hudson Bay, from Eskimo Point north, have a much better understanding of how to treat caribou-skin garments. They know which month provides the best skins for the *atigi* or inner garment, and for the *qulittaq* or outer garment. They also show remarkable skill in converting deerskins (after thoroughly scraping both sides and in many cases subjecting them to human perspiration) to a perfectly bleached suede-like leather.

It is correct to say that the coast-living people depend more on sealskins for both clothing and footwear for the greater part of the year. For summer wear the impermeability of the sealskin is important, as is the use of deer sinew for thread, which swells and fills the needle hole. But by removing the thin impermeable layer of the skin by a rotting process, it is possible to get boot soles for winter use that do not freeze, even in the coldest weather. Where caribou are plentiful it is customary to wear comfortable 'slippers' with a drawstring of caribou sinew.

The softening of sealskin leather for sewing was done traditionally by chewing which induces a sufficient amount of saliva to render the skin soft and pliable. This was mostly done by the female children. However, the remark of a nineteenth-century ethnologist which is recorded on page 11, namely that 'no amount of working will render [sealskin] more than moderately pliable' is a matter of dispute.

A thorough examination of all the beautiful carvings and drawings in the book is a rewarding experience. The theme of the amautik is carried out in the majority of the plates and the characteristc stoop of the woman with a child in the amautik is apparent in many of the figures. This is a handsome book, heartily recommended.

Dudley Copland is a veteran of the arctic fur-trade era. He joined the Hudson's Bay Company in 1923 and served for seventeen years in the Western and Eastern Arctic. He is author of the books, 'Livingstone of the Arctic', 'Ookpik the Ogling Arctic Owl', and numerous articles and radio scripts.

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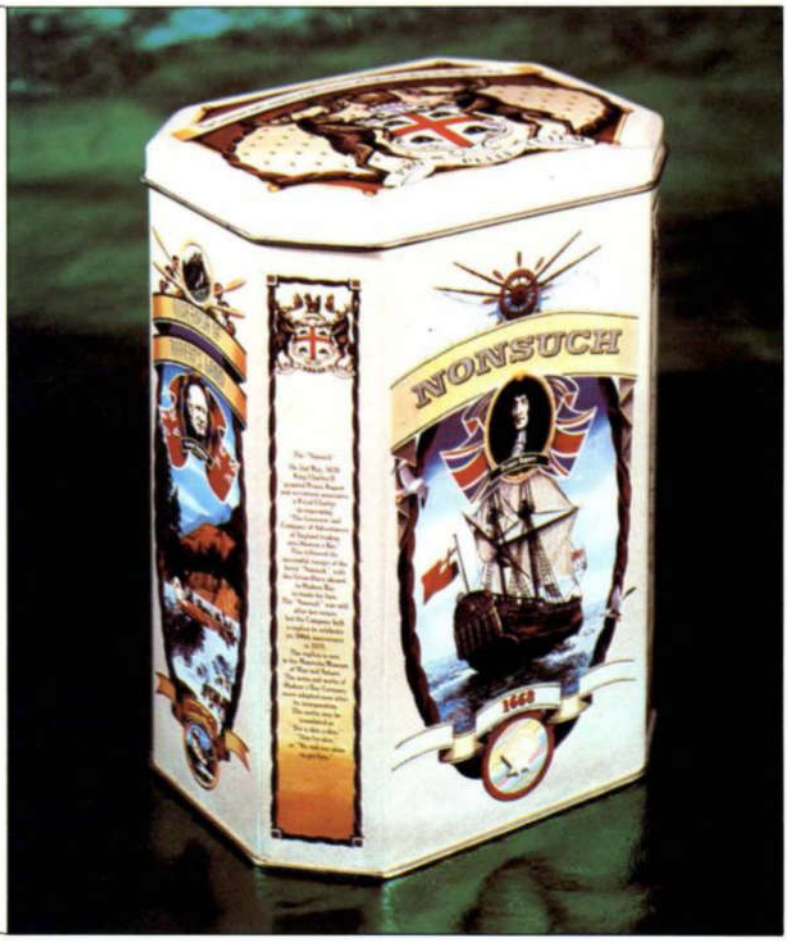

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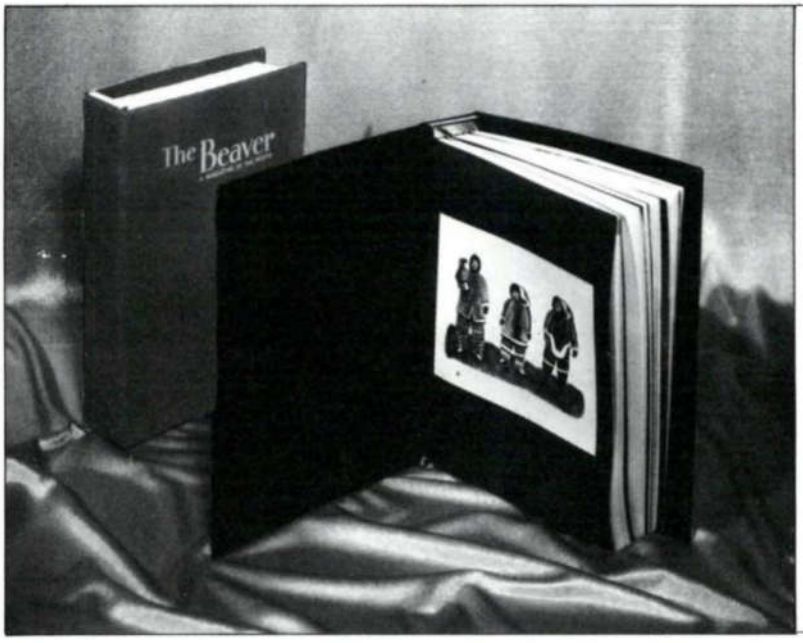

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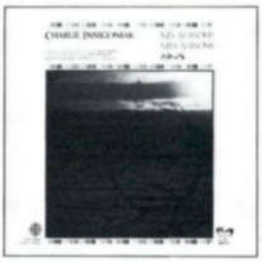

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